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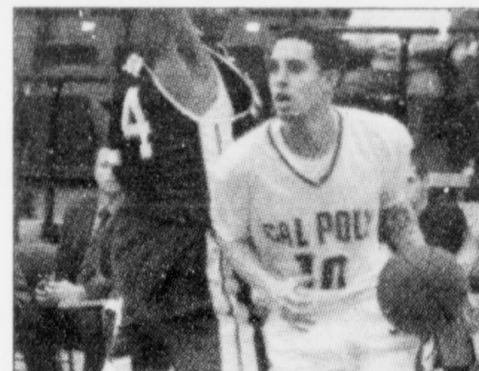


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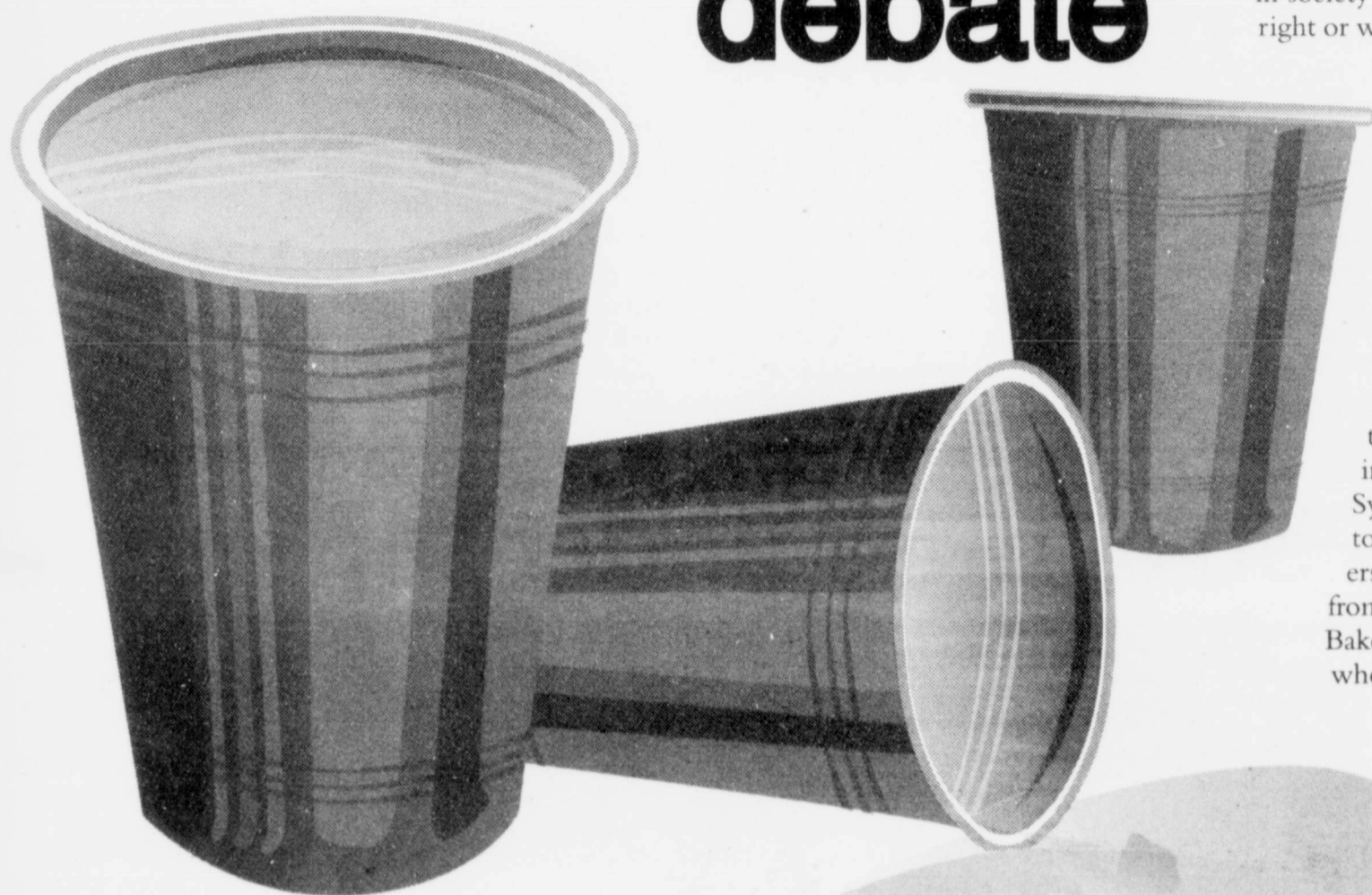


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Thursday, January 29, 2009

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The drinking-age debate



LAUREN RABAINO MUSTANG DAILY

comes to Poly

Cassandra Keyse
MUSTANG DAILY

The issue of lowering the legal drinking age from 21 to 18 has long been in discussion. Would there be repercussions in society if 18-year-olds were given this right or would young people accept their new-found freedom and exercise it responsibly? The next installment of ASI Events' True Life Series will explore this very issue when The Drinking Age Debate comes to Chumash Auditorium Thursday at 8 p.m.

Last summer, as many as 100 presidents from some of the most prestigious universities in the country — Dartmouth, Syracuse and Duke Universities to name a few — asked lawmakers to lower the drinking age from 21 to 18. Although President Baker was not among the presidents who spoke in favor of lowering the drinking age, ASI Events wanted to bring the debate to Cal Poly because they think topic is relevant to college students.

"This is the perfect topic for students because this is directly im-

pacting them," ASI Program Coordinator Michelle Curro said. "This is ages 18 to 21, those are the ages of students at Cal Poly. This is legislation that could potentially directly impact them and so we thought that this is something that's perfect for the ASI True Life Series."

The Drinking Age Debate features two speakers, one on each side of the issue. John McCardnell, who will speak in favor of lowering the legal drinking age, is a former college president and the founder of the group Choose Responsibly, which thinks that a lower drinking age will help young people make more responsible decisions about alcohol. Speaking in opposition to a lowered drinking age will be James C. Fell, Senior Program Director of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, who is considered an expert about the societal effects of a lowered drinking age. The two will debate for 45 minutes after which they will take questions from audience members.

Although ASI declined to speculate on expected attendance numbers, ASI Events has used various avenues to spread the word.

"We've done a lot of outreach to clubs, sororities and fraternities, health education classes and basically any class that could be somewhat interested in this topic," Curro said. "We've contacted professors and department heads and urged them about it because this is something that really affects every single person on campus, so we want to make sure that the people that are inter-

see Debate, page 3

Business students now preparing free income tax returns

Alisha Axsom
MUSTANG DAILY

It's that time of year again, when many people would rather roll over and play dead than go through the hassle of filing taxes. Luckily, help will soon arrive for Cal Poly students and local low-income families in the form of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).

The Orfalea College of Business is providing free tax preparation services by Cal Poly business seniors every Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. through March 14 in the business building's third floor computer lab. Anyone who makes less than \$42,000 a year is welcome to use the service.

"It's a good service, especially now when the economy is so down in the dumps," said business senior Caitlin Dooley, one of the students involved. "Tax preparation can be pretty costly so it's a big help to low-income people in the community."

The annual program will expand this year due to a recent grant from Pacific Capital Bancorp. Last year, Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria collaborated with United Way to help families in Santa Barbara County prepare their taxes but because of the grant money, Cal Poly students will be able to help them out as well.

see Taxes, page 3

Huge stimulus bill passes House as Obama prods

David Espo
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a swift victory for President Barack Obama, the Democratic-controlled House approved a historically huge \$819 billion stimulus bill Wednesday night with spending increases and tax cuts at the heart of the young administration's plan to revive a badly ailing economy.

The vote was 244-188, with Republicans unanimous in opposition despite Obama's frequent pleas for bipartisan support.

"This recovery plan will save or create more than three million new jobs over the next few years," the president said in a written statement released moments after the House voted. Still later, he welcomed congressional leaders of both parties to the White House for drinks as he continued to lobby for the legislation.

see Bill, page 2



CHARLES DHARAPAK ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Barack Obama shakes hands with audience members as JetBlue Chief Executive Officer David Barger, right, looks on after the president spoke about the economy Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009, in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

New program teaches students about police life

Genevieve Loggins

MUSTANG DAILY

The University Police Department is holding a new type of training course for students interested in learning more about the role of police officers in throughout the county.

The course goes from March 31 to June 2 with classes held once a week. Applicants will practice live action training in traffic collision investigations, crime scene investigation, and domestic violence issues as well as tour the county jail.

Completion of S.L.E.E.T. will not qualify participants to become official police officers, but it will give them an understanding of the routine and procedures of an officer, said University Police Chief Bill Watton.

He said that this is the first time Cal Poly has offered a training course to students modeled after state and local police academies.

To participate, one must be 18 years old or older, a current Cal Poly student, or an employed faculty or staff member.

A routine background check must be completed prior to enrollment. Applicants must have no DUI arrests within the past three years or any felony convictions.

The course will be limited to the first 20 qualified applicants who enroll.

"Those who participate will have the opportunity to see what law enforcement is like through the eyes of a police officer," said Jason Le Clair, the University Police Department officer in charge of the course.

Le Clair started working for the University Police Department about a year ago, and worked as a police officer in the Atascadero area for six years.

His experience teaching dif-

ferent police procedures to younger students gave him the idea to create S.L.E.E.T. at Cal Poly.

"I came up with the idea, (of S.L.E.E.T.) when I was an explorer advisor teaching high school students who were very interested and excited to learn the ways of a police officer," Le Clair said.

The program currently has one faculty member and four students excited to begin, Le Clair said. Four to six officers from the department will be teaching different information throughout the ten-week course, helping participants to learn from a variety of incidents.

Hands-on training and detailed explanation as to how the department works will be the first training programs offered.

"When I began my training for the (California Highway Patrol) officer program, I wish I would have known about a program like S.L.E.E.T. in order to gain more knowledge of police departments' procedures," said Dan Lickness, San Luis Obispo resident and member of the CHP program.

The classes will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and follow a normal class structure complete with power point presentations and short lectures. The main activities will be live role-playing and assimilated training, from car collisions to arresting procedures.

The best part of programs like S.L.E.E.T. is the assimilated training events that resemble a real life scenario, Lickness said.

"I believe this will be a big deal, and very big success," Le Clair said.

For further information on how you can join the S.L.E.E.T. training course, contact Officer Jason Le Clair at 756-5584, or email at jpleclair@calpoly.edu.

Bill

continued from page 1

Earlier, Obama declared, "We don't have a moment to spare" as congressional allies hastened to do his bidding in the face of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

The vote sent the bill to the Senate, where debate could begin as early as Monday on a companion measure already taking shape. Democratic leaders have pledged to have legislation ready for Obama's signature by mid-February.

A mere eight days after Inauguration Day, Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the events heralded a new era. "The ship of state is difficult to turn," said the California Democrat. "But that is what we must do. That is what President Obama called us to do in his inaugural address."

With unemployment at its highest level in a quarter-century, the banking industry wobbling despite the infusion of staggering sums of bailout money and states struggling with budget crises, Democrats said the legislation was desperately needed.

"Another week that we delay is another 100,000 or more people unemployed. I don't think we want that on our consciences," said Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and one of the leading architects of the legislation.

Republicans said the bill was short on tax cuts and contained too much spending, much of it wasteful, and would fall far short of administration's predictions of job creation.

The party's leader, Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, said the measure "won't create many jobs, but it will create plenty of programs and projects through slow-moving government spending." A GOP alternative, comprised almost entirely of tax cuts, was defeated, 266-170.

On the final vote, the legislation drew the support of all but 11 Democrats, while all Republicans opposed it.

The White House-backed legislation includes an estimated \$544 billion in federal spending and \$275 billion

in tax cuts for individuals and businesses. The totals remained in flux nearly until the final vote, due to official re-estimates and a last-minute addition of \$3 billion for mass transit.

Included is money for traditional job-creating programs such as highway construction and mass transit projects. But the measure tickets far more for unemployment benefits, health care and food stamp increases designed to aid victims of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Tens of billions of additional dollars would go to the states, which confront the prospect of deep budget cuts of their own. That money marks an attempt to ease the recession's impact on schools and law enforcement. With funding for housing weatherization and other provisions, the bill also makes a down payment on Obama's campaign promise of creating jobs that can reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil.

The centerpiece tax cut calls for a \$500 break for single workers and \$1,000 for couples, including those who don't earn enough to owe federal income taxes.

The House vote marked merely the first of several major milestones a for the legislation, which Democratic leaders have pledged to deliver to the White House for Obama's signature by mid-February.

Already a more bipartisan — and costlier — measure is taking shape in the Senate, and Obama personally pledged to House and Senate Republicans in closed-door meetings on Tuesday that he is ready to accept modifications as the legislation advances.

Rahm Emanuel, a former Illinois congressman who is Obama's chief of staff, invited nearly a dozen House Republicans to the White House late Tuesday for what one participant said was a soft sales job.

This lawmaker quoted Emanuel as telling the group that polling shows roughly 80 percent support for the legislation, and that Republicans oppose it at their political peril. The lawmaker spoke on condition of anonymity, say-

see Bill, page 3

Structures under the sun



RACHEL GLAS MUSTANG DAILY

Students built structures of PVC pipe and string on Dexter Lawn for their architectural engineering class yesterday. The student-designed structures emulate different types of large-scale buildings.



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LA murder-suicide dad awash in debt



DAVID ZENTZ ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rosa Bella Senor, of Long Beach, wipes away a tear while paying her respects to the Lupoe family in front of their home in the Wilmington section of Los Angeles on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009. Police believe Ervin Lupoe, 40, killed his five children and his wife before turning the gun on himself. Both adults had recently lost their jobs.

Thomas Watkins
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Awash in debt, behind on his mortgage and recently fired from his job at a hospital, Ervin Lupoe was planning on leaving California.

He'd pulled his kids out of their school, packed his sport utility vehicle with snow chains and winter clothing for him and his family and appeared ready for the trip to his brother-in-law's home in Garden City, Kan.

It's not yet known if he was planning on leaving for good in a bid to flee his mounting money problems or if the trip would have only been temporary.

Whatever his intention, Lupoe never got to Kansas.

Instead, police say, he shot his five children and wife to death before turning the gun on himself.

"Something happened in the last 48 hours that made him snap," said Detective David Cortez, the lead investigator in the case. "(He saw) no other way, no other direction."

Investigators found evidence of spiraling financial woes. Lupoe owed the Internal Revenue Service at least \$15,000 and a check he wrote the agency for that amount had just bounced.

He also was at least one month behind on a mortgage for his home in Wilmington, near the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Jobs are scarce in the area and the real-estate market is sinking. Lupoe owed about \$2,500 and a late fee, Cortez said. He also owed thousands more on a home equity line of credit.

Police found the bodies of Lupoe, his wife and five children Tuesday morning. Evidence suggests Lupoe probably shot his wife, Ana, first then killed his children. He appeared to have attempted to muffle the sound of gunfire by shooting a semiautomatic handgun through a pillow.

"It looked like they were all caught by surprise," Cortez said.

On a bed in an upstairs bedroom, the bodies of twin 2-year-old boys, Benjamin and Christian, were found beside their dead mother. In another bedroom, the bodies of 5-year-old twin girls, Jazmin and Jassely, and their 8-year-old sister Britney lay on a mattress pad next to their lifeless father.

Neighbors told police they thought they heard firecrackers going off between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday, meaning Lupoe was likely home with the bodies of his slain family for more than 12 hours before he killed himself.

Cortez said he thought the media had rushed to associate Lupoe's actions with the stagnant state of the economy, when really he alone was to blame for what he did.

"Being there and walking through the crime scene, it's a lot easier to see him as the suspect that did this to other people than the economy did this to him," Cortez said. "It's how he chose to respond to the circumstances, he had options."

Lupoe, 40, and his wife Ana, 38, a Guatemala native who'd been living in the U.S. for at least 17 years, had both recently been fired from their jobs at Kaiser Perma-

nente Medical Center West Los Angeles.

Kaiser Permanente spokeswoman Diana Bonta said the couple were fired after an internal investigation found they forged supervisors' signatures. They also misrepresented their income on documents provided to a non-profit agency that provides assistance for child care, she said.

"They were terminated because in the health care field, records are an important part of the process, and people trust us with their health," Bonta told the Los Angeles Times.

Several police officials familiar with the investigation told the Times the Lupoes each made more than \$40 per hour but made it appear they got \$7 to \$10 per hour so they could qualify for a child care assistance program. They spoke anonymously because the investigation is ongoing.

Lupoe faxed a bitter two-page letter to a local TV news station the morning he killed himself, saying a hospital administrator told him he "should not even have bothered to come to work" and "should have blown (his) brains out."

Investigators interviewed the hospital administrator, who said Lupoe's characterization of their conversation was an out-of-context misrepresentation and she denied saying what Lupoe said she did.

In his letter, Lupoe went on to suggest it was his wife's idea to end the family members' lives.

"He had one of those victim mentalities," Cortez said. "There is nothing yet that suggests his wife was a willing party."

Cortez said Lupoe had previously come into contact with police. He was arrested in 1999 for negligent discharge of a firearm and in about 2004 police were called to a store where Lupoe was "acting a little crazy." A diabetic, he apparently was suffering a sugar imbalance and his behavior returned to normal once he'd gotten medication.

Lupoe phoned his brother-in-law Monday morning saying he was on the way to Kansas, though it's not thought he actually left, Cortez said. Caesar Ramirez asked to speak to his sister but Lupoe declined. The next he heard from Lupoe was a phone call Tuesday morning saying he'd just killed his family and he left everything, including a small settlement from a traffic accident, to his brother-in-law.

Ramirez called Garden City police who contacted Los Angeles police, Garden City police Sgt. Michael Reagle said.

Charlene Telles, 34, lives several houses down from the Lupoes and said the entire family attended a birthday party for an 8-year-old girl on the street only a few weeks ago. Neighborhood kids bounced up and down on an inflatable jumper. And while Telles didn't speak to the family or even recall seeing them, a friend reminded her after the tragedy that they had been there, too.

"She said they were fine. They were playing. They were eating. They were sitting there. They were fine," she said. "Maybe they just didn't want anyone to know what was going on inside."

Debate

continued from page 1

ested in this know about it and are going to attend."

ASI Events has also passed out fliers in the University Union and the approach seems to be working.

"I have definitely heard a lot of students, when passing out fliers for this event, with different opinions," music senior and ASI Events member Michael Annuzzi said. "I can just give a flier out to students and immediately they already want to share their opinion."

The True Life Series started two years ago in an effort to educate students about various controversial issues. The series' title, True

Life, was inspired by the MTV reality show that documents young people with unique lifestyles. Past debates featured topics including pro-life vs. pro-choice, evolution vs. intelligent design, as well as the most popular debate to-date between pornography actor Ron Jeremy and Pastor Craig Gross on the pornography industry.

It was so popular that 3,000 students had to be turned away from Chumash Auditorium because of safety regulations.

"These debates really bring out a cool crowd of students," Annuzzi said. "We're in college, we're in higher education. We all have our own opinions and want to voice our opinions and thoughts about these things. These debates really do allow that to happen."

Bill

continued from page 2

ing there was no agreement to speak publicly about the session.

In fact, though, many Republicans in the House are virtually immune from Democratic challenges because of the makeup of their districts, and have more to fear from GOP primary challenges in 2010. As a result, they have relatively little political incentive to break with conservative orthodoxy and support hundreds of billions in new federal spending.

Also, some Republican lawmakers have said in recent days they know they will have a second

chance to support a bill when the final House-Senate compromise emerges in a few weeks.

Rep. Randy Neugebauer, R-Texas, sought to strip out all the spending from the legislation before final passage, arguing that the entire cost of the bill would merely add to soaring federal deficits. "Where are we going to get the money," he asked, but his attempt failed overwhelmingly, 302-134.

Obeys had a ready retort. "They don't look like Herbert Hoover, I guess, but there are an awful lot of people in this chamber who think like Herbert Hoover," he said, referring to the president whose term is forever linked in history with the Great Depression.

Taxes

continued from page 1

Each student will spend one Saturday completing tax returns in Santa Maria and the money from the grant will be used to help transport the students, Dooley said.

Around 85 students are involved in the I.R.S.-endorsed program that requires them to go through extensive training in tax preparation. Local Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) volunteer their time to review the tax forms after the students prepare them.

"We're doing all the work, but the professionals will review it to make sure we didn't mess up," said business senior Anthony Fok.

Janice Carr, who co-coordinates the VITA program with Jack Robison, said the motivation for the project is more than just helping students fulfill their senior project requirement.

"It's a really good way for students to work hands-on with clients," Carr said. "They learn how to interview clients, work with

sensitive financial issues, and how to work with partners."

Students also learn to work in a supervised setting and acquire real life experience before they leave school, Carr said. As a community service, VITA is valuable because many people can't afford to pay a CPA so they either file their taxes incorrectly or don't file them at all.

Before participating, hopefuls must go through a screening process that to allow the business students determine if they can help the individual. Students will work in pairs to e-file the tax forms.

Participants do not need to know which form they need, but are asked to bring the following items: Social Security card or ITIN number, all 2008 tax-related documents and their 2007 tax returns if possible. Dooley said it's imperative that families bring all information regarding their child-care service, including identification number and phone number, if applicable.

For additional information, call 756-2667 (English and Spanish).



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Calif. octuplets said to be doing 'amazingly well'



KAISER PERMANETE BELLFLOWER MEDICAL CENTER

The nursing staff poses for a photograph after delivering octuplets to a mother Monday in Bellflower, Calif.

Shaya Tayefe Mohajer
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The nation's second set of live-born octuplets were all breathing on their own Wednesday, more than 48 hours after a Southern California woman gave birth to the surprising bunch.

Two of the babies were still receiving oxygen, but inhaling and exhaling on their own.

"They're doing amazingly well," said Socorro Serrano, spokeswoman for Kaiser Permanente's Bellflower Medical Center, where the babies were born nine weeks premature.

The mother, whose identity remains a secret, had not yet been able to hold any of the delicate babies — six boys and two girls — who were born weighing between 1 pound, 8 ounces and 3 pounds, 4 ounces.

However, she was able to see them all in their incubators Tuesday night.

In lieu of names, the babies have been assigned letters A through H, in the order of their birth Monday morning.

Four of the babies — A, B, C and D — were receiving tube-feedings of donated breast milk every three hours, said Miriam Khoury, clinical director of inpatient obstetrical nursing at the hospital.

The stomach of Baby F didn't absorb the first feeding he was given Wednesday and it was stopped, said Khoury.

Baby F, along with Babies A and C, was being given total parental nutrition feedings, or TPN, which deliver fluid, electrolytes, calories, amino acids, vitamins, minerals and fats into an infant's vein.

The babies still receiving oxygen were E and G. Each was receiving less than one liter of oxygen per hour, a small amount, said Khoury.

The babies were expected to remain hospitalized for several weeks and could face serious developmental problems later on because of their small size.

The mother has begun pumping breast milk in anticipation of eight hungry babies. And with feedings come diaper changes: those happen every two hours.

The babies' incubators were being kept very near one another in the same room, for bonding, said Khoury.

Khoury said the addition of eight babies to the neonatal unit had not stressed the hospital, which has handled a higher volume of tiny patients before.

"This is history for us, so of course we're happy," said Khoury, who helped coordinate the materials needed for the labor.

Doctors were surprised by the eighth baby, because they were only anticipating seven, said Dr. Harold Henry, chief of maternal and fetal medicine, and one of 46 doctors, nurses and assistants who delivered the babies by cesarean.



JEFF CHIU ASSOCIATED PRESS

Attorney John Burris, second from right, seeks \$25 million for the family of a man fatally shot by a transit officer on New Year's Day.

Civil rights lawyer takes Oakland shooting case

Paul Elias
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Suing police officers is good business for civil rights lawyer John Burris.

Over the past 30 years, the former prosecutor has earned millions of dollars for handling hundreds of police brutality suits, other racially charged cases and high-profile lawsuits.

Burris, 63, helped win a \$3.8 million jury verdict for Rodney King over a videotaped beating in 1991 at the hands of Los Angeles police. He defended basketball star Latrell Sprewell against reckless driving charges in 1998. And he obtained a \$42,000 settlement for the late rapper Tupac Shakur in a 1991 brutality suit against the Oakland police.

So it came as little surprise in legal circles that Burris was hired by the family of Oscar Grant, the 22-year-old black man gunned down by a white transit police officer as he lay face down on a Bay Area Rapid Transit platform here on New Year's Day.

Prosecutors allege that Grant was restrained and about to be handcuffed when BART officer Johannes Mehserle shot him once in the back. Murder charges have been filed against Mehserle.

Burris, on behalf of Grant's family, has filed a \$25 million claim against BART, which is a precursor to a lawsuit.

Burris said Grant's death is one of the two most unsettling cases he has handled since graduating from the University of California, Berkeley's law school in 1976. The other is the lawsuit he filed for the family of Mack "Jody" Woodfox, who was fatally shot in the back while fleeing Oakland police after a traffic stop in July.

"It's the shooting in the back that causes people to go nuts," Burris said of the sometimes-violent demonstrations here over Grant's death. "That's as bad as it gets."

Burris' portfolio and his visibility as a television commentator have helped forge his reputation as an aggressive advocate for Northern California's black community.

Burris figures he takes about 50 police brutality cases a year. Many are relatively small, such as ex-convicts getting teeth knocked out by police or black women accusing officers of conducting illegal strip searches.

But in 2006, he helped secure \$1.3 million in settlements from the city of Oakland after Iraq war protesters accused police of using excessive force to break up a raucous demonstration.

In 2003, Burris won a \$10.9 mil-

lion settlement from Oakland to settle the notorious "Riders" case, in which police allegedly arrested and planted evidence on 119 innocent suspects. It remains the city's largest settlement.

"Every case begets another case," he said.

His biggest target, by far, is the Oakland Police Department.

Neither Oakland City Attorney John Russo, whose office routinely fights Burris' lawsuits, nor Oakland Police Department union president Dom Arotzarena were willing to share their thoughts about Burris.

Burris has sometimes been in trouble with the law himself. In 2005, a federal judge sharply rebuked him for failing to properly investigate a claim before filing one lawsuit.

U.S. District Court Judge Vaughn Walker fined Burris and another lawyer \$10,800 for filing a lawsuit after only a single interview with the clients, who accused the police department of wrongly killing a mentally disturbed Oakland resident who stabbed an officer.

Burris defended himself before the judge by pointing to his long track record of filing successful lawsuits.

"Indeed, Burris' years of experience and success serve to magnify the egregiousness of the conduct at issue in this case," Walker said in ordering sanctions.

Burris' clients fired him in 2007, and the judge filed a complaint to the State Bar last year. Burris said he hired a lawyer to write a letter to the state bar, and that officials there "closed the file" without taking any disciplinary action.

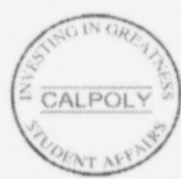
It wasn't the first time Burris got into legal hot water. In 1996, the State Bar suspended him for 30 days for sending misleading solicitations to victims of mass disasters, which he blamed on overzealous underlings. He was also chided at the same time for improperly mixing clients' money with his own, and the bar found that he "recklessly failed to perform legal services with competence," according to bar records.

But it was that same year that Burris worked on what would be his proudest case.

Burris said he defended for free a 6-year-old boy charged with assault for dumping an infant out of a bassinet and then beating him. Burris convinced a juvenile court referee to put the boy into foster care rather than the criminal system.

Burris said he has kept in contact with his client, who is soon to be released from state care as an 18-year-old.

"He made it," Burris said.



Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs



Barack Obama: No Excuses For Lack of Student Achievement in a Globally Competitive World

Presented by
Dr. Dennis Watson

Highlights

- Promoting Leadership
- Working towards Graduation
- Success in Life/School
- Empowerment

Dennis Rahiim Watson is the Executive Director of the National Black Youth Leadership Council. He is a world-renowned speaker on diversity and leadership, and has motivated students, staff, faculty and administrators at colleges nationwide. He has been described as a cross between Jesse Jackson and Bill Cosby and has empowered audiences with information for positive thinking.

Persons with disabilities may request accommodations in advance by contacting the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs 756-1521

Date: February 2, 2009

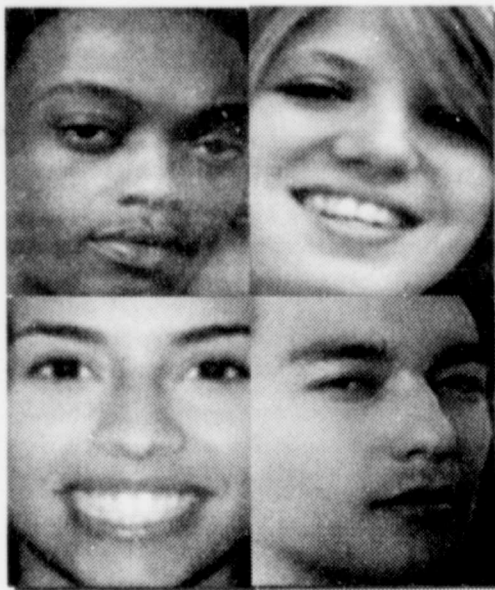
Time: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Place: PAC Pavilion

Contact:

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for Student Affairs

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BRYNJAR GAUTI ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iceland's Social Affairs Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir speaks to the media following party negotiations in Reykjavik, Iceland, Wednesday. Sigurdardottir, 66, an openly gay former flight attendant, is expected to become Iceland's interim prime minister, and will lead the country until new elections are held.

Iceland to appoint gay woman to interim prime minister post

David Stringer

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iceland's next leader will be an openly gay former flight attendant who parlayed her experience as a union organizer into a decades-long political career.

Both parties forming Iceland's new coalition government support the appointment of Johanna Sigurdardottir, the island nation's 66-year-old social affairs minister, as Iceland's interim prime minister.

"Now we need a strong government that works with the people," Sigurdardottir told reporters Wednesday, adding that a new administration will likely be installed Saturday.

Sigurdardottir will lead until new elections are held, likely in May. But analysts say she's unlikely to remain in office — chiefly because her center-left Social Democratic Alliance isn't expected to rank among the major parties after the election.

In opinion polls, it trails the Left-Green movement, a junior partner in the new coalition.

Iceland's previous conservative-led government failed Monday after the country's banks collapsed last fall under the weight of huge debts amassed during years of rapid economic growth. The country's currency has since plummeted, while

inflation and unemployment are soaring.

Former Prime Minister Geir Haarde won't lead his Independence Party into the new elections because he needs treatment for throat cancer.

While Haarde endured angry protests for months and had his limousine pelted with eggs, polling company Capacent Gallup said Sigurdardottir was Iceland's most popular politician in November, with an approval rating of 73 percent.

She was the only minister to see her rating improve on the previous year's score, Capacent Gallup said Wednesday. The poll of 2,000 people had a margin of error of plus or minus three percent.

"It's a question of trust, people believe that she actually cares about people," said Olafur Hardarson, a political scientist at the University of Iceland.

Sigurdardottir is seen by many as a savior to the bubbling tensions in Iceland. Thousands have joined anti-government protests recently. Last week, police used tear gas for the first time in about 50 years to disperse crowds.

"She is a senior parliamentarian, she is respected and loved by all of Iceland," said Environment Minister Thorunn Sveinbjarnardottir, a fellow Alliance party member.

The new leader is known for allocating generous amounts of public funding to help the disabled, the elderly and organizations tackling domestic violence.

But conservative critics say Sigurdardottir's leftist leanings and lack of business experience won't help her fix the economy. "Johanna is a very good woman — but she likes public spending, she is a tax raiser," Haarde said.

Iceland has negotiated about \$10 billion in bailout loans from the International Monetary Fund and individual countries. The loans are currently being held as foreign currency reserves.

Banks that were nationalized last year are once again open and trading — but Iceland still owes millions of dollars to foreign depositors.

After acting as a labor organizer when she worked as a flight attendant for Loftleidir Airlines — now Icelandair — in the 1960s and 1970s, Sigurdardottir was elected to Iceland's parliament in 1978. She served as social affairs minister from 1987-1994 and from 2007.

"If there's anyone who can restore trust in the political system it's her," said Eyvindur Karlsson, a 27-year-old translator from Reykjavik. "People respect her because

see Minister, page 6

Sudan convicts spy for war crimes court

Mohamed Osman

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Sudanese man was convicted Wednesday of spying for the International Criminal Court ahead of its expected decision on whether to seek President Omar al-Bashir's arrest on charges of war crimes in Darfur.

Mohammed al-Sirri was convicted Wednesday of collecting and intending to leak police records and documents to the Netherlands-based court and was sentenced to 17 years in prison, Sudan's state-run news agency reported.

He is believed to be the first person anywhere convicted on charges of helping the international court, which is investigating war crimes allegations in Darfur.

Al-Sirri was a volunteer with government troops in Darfur, but no other information about him was immediately available.

Al-Sirri had pleaded not guilty and said he confessed under duress.

A spokeswoman for the office of the international court's prosecutor denounced the verdict.

"If the international community needed one more proof that the Sudanese will not investigate and prosecute massive crimes committed in Darfur, this is it," she said. "Instead of collecting evidence, they intimidate, torture or convict anyone they suspect might be willing to give information on the crimes."

The spokeswoman spoke on condition of anonymity, citing court procedures.

The SUNA news agency said al-Sirri was linked to the international court's case against Ahmed Harun — a Sudanese official who faces an arrest warrant on charges of crimes against humanity for leading a local Arab militia against ethnic Africans in Darfur.

The United Nations says up to 300,000 people have been killed in the six-year old conflict, which erupted when mostly ethnic African rebels took up arms against the central, mostly Arab government, complaining of discrimination and neglect.

Sudan refuses to recognize the international court and has refused to turn over Harun.

The news agency quoted judge Abdel-Wahab Ismail as saying al-Sirri's actions have "harmed the country's political position and its efforts to achieve unity."

But Sudanese human rights lawyer Nabil Adeeb questioned the verdict.

"Spying means you give information to a foreign country, but the ICC is not a country," Adeeb told The Associated Press. "It's a court, whether you recognize it or not."

It was not immediately clear if al-Sirri would appeal within the two weeks allowed.

A lawyer familiar with the case said al-Sirri claimed during the trial that he was set up and that the classified documents were handed to him when he went to the Sudanese interior ministry to ask for his personal file.

The lawyer said al-Sirri was arrested with the classified documents in his possession, and that a ministry clerk testified he had asked for them. The lawyer spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because he did not represent al-Sirri.

The international court is also considering issuing an arrest warrant for Sudan's president, al-Bashir.

The court's chief prosecutor has accused al-Bashir of masterminding attempts to wipe out African tribes in Darfur with a campaign of murder, rape and deportation.

The president is also accused of unleashing militia allied with the government to target civilians, rather than rebels, in villages and camps.

The Hague tribunal's judges are expected to announce within weeks whether they will issue an arrest warrant for al-Bashir — the first sitting head of state named as a war crimes suspect by the court's prosecutors.

Sudan has dismissed the accusations and has said the U.N.'s figures on Darfur deaths are exaggerated.

The Bush administration called the crimes in Darfur genocide, and the U.N. Security Council asked the international court to investigate.

-Associated Press Writer Mike Corder in The Hague and Maggie Michael and Sarah El Deeb in Cairo contributed to this report.

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WORD ON THE STREET

"What is your opinion on lowering the drinking age to 18?"

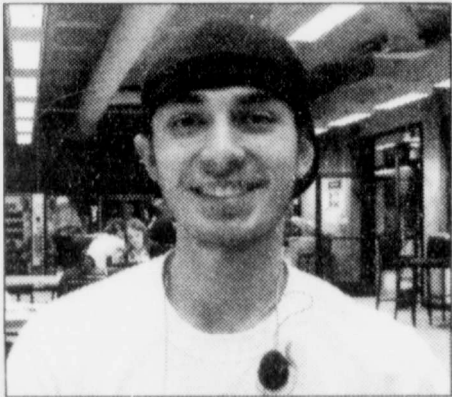


"You can fight for our country but can't have a drink. If you wait to drink, once you turn 21 some people go crazy and that's not a good thing either."

-Jen Montrose,
general engineering senior

"I would say it would be really irresponsible to lower it. Kids at 18 don't understand the responsibility of drinking and are less in control."

-Angel Valdez,
mathematics junior



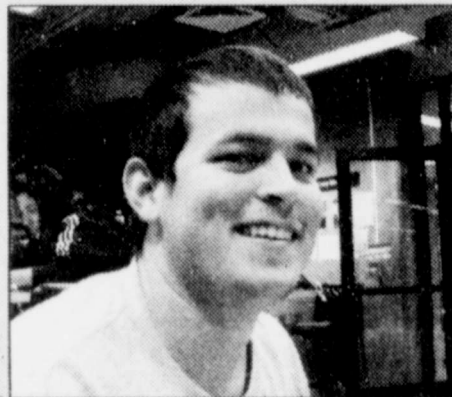
"I think they should lower it since people I know binge drink more since they do it behind close doors because they can't have a drink in public."

-Alex Andresen,
computer science junior



"I'm for it. There's already kids drinking. If you look at Europe, they have more responsible drinkers that are young."

-Brian Cooper,
business senior



Mike Fernandez
5th Year, Wine & Viticulture
"I like to hear students' perspectives on different issues."

Get caught reading the Mustang Daily and win a free shirt!

State

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The city of San Francisco is accusing health insurers of discriminating against women by charging substantially higher premiums based solely on gender.

The allegations appear in a lawsuit filed Tuesday by City Attorney Dennis Herrera against California insurance and health care regulators.

In the suit filed in San Francisco Superior Court, Herrera alleges that gender-rating practices by health insurers are discriminatory and violate the state's constitution.

Herrera is asking that current state laws that allow such practices be struck down.

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP) — California State University says it has halted construction on more than 130 projects at its 23 campuses.

CSU officials said Wednesday that the projects are being suspended because the state has stopped distributing money for university projects financed by state bonds.

The suspended projects include classroom buildings, libraries, performing arts centers and major infrastructure. There are about 13,000 jobs associated with the \$848 million in construction.

Earlier this month, CSU officials announced the university was freezing salaries and hiring to control costs in response to the state's budget crisis.

National

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — An aerial acrobat died after falling 15 to 20 feet and landing headfirst during a performance in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Authorities were investigating the cause of the incident Tuesday at the FBR Open golf tournament event that killed 33-year-old Jose Angel Vera of San Diego.

Scottsdale police Sgt. Mark Clark says Vera fell during a Cirque du Soleil-type performance in which the man unravels his body from a sash while suspended in the air.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The salmonella outbreak spawned one of the largest ever product recalls Wednesday by a Georgia peanut plant where federal inspectors reported finding roaches, mold, a leaking roof and other sanitary problems.

Managers at the Blakely, Ga. plant owned by Peanut Corp. of America continued shipping peanut products even after they were found to contain salmonella.

Peanut Corp. expanded its recall Wednesday to all peanut products produced at the plant since Jan. 1, 2007. The company is relatively small, but its peanut paste is an ingredient in hundreds of other food products, from ice cream, to Asian-style sauces, to dog biscuits. Major national brands of peanut butter are not affected.

International

OTTAWA (AP) — Canada's main opposition party backed away from plans to topple the Conservative government, saying Wednesday the prime minister is "on probation" and must give periodic economic updates to Parliament.

The opposition Liberals had vowed to use a parliamentary confidence vote to take down Prime Minister Stephen Harper's minority government if his stimulus plan fell short.

But Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff said he would support Harper's \$32 billion plan if he agrees to give regular status reports on the economy to lawmakers.

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — Chinese Premier Wen Jiabo brought cautious optimism to the World Economic Forum Wednesday, predicting that his country will achieve its target of 8 percent economic growth this year despite the global financial meltdown.

Wen called for enhanced U.S.-China cooperation to address the issue, even as he and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin obliquely criticized the United States, blaming a relentless pursuit of profits for the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

Both Wen and Putin said the crisis had impacted their countries' economies, but Putin refrained from specific forecasts.

Minister

continued from page 5

she's never been afraid of standing up to her own party. They see her as someone who isn't tainted by the economic crisis."

In 1995, Sigurdardottir quit the party and formed her own, which

won four parliamentary seats in a national election. Several years later, she rejoined her old party when it merged with three other center-left groups.

While a woman has served in the largely symbolic role of president, Sigurdardottir will be Iceland's first female prime minister.

She lives with journalist Jonina Leosdottir, who became her civil

partner in 2002, and has two sons from a previous marriage.

Sigurdardottir is best known for her reaction to a failed bid to lead her party in 1994. "My time will come," she predicted in her concession speech.

-Associated Press Writer Valur Gunnarsson contributed to this report.

Little Love Notes

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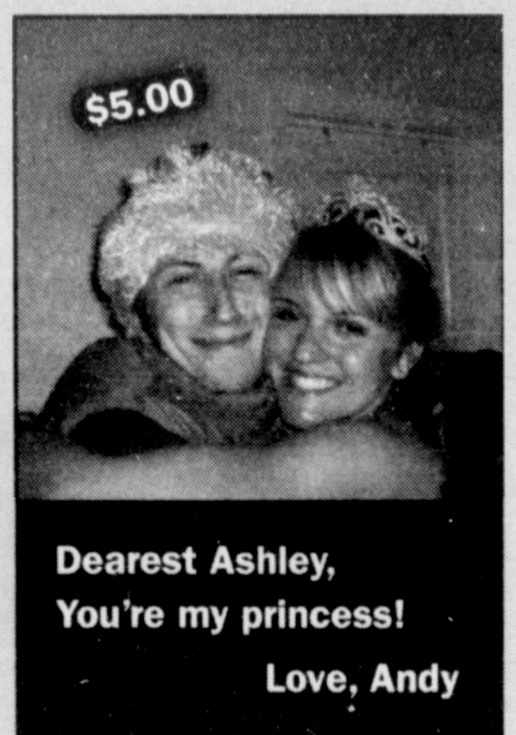
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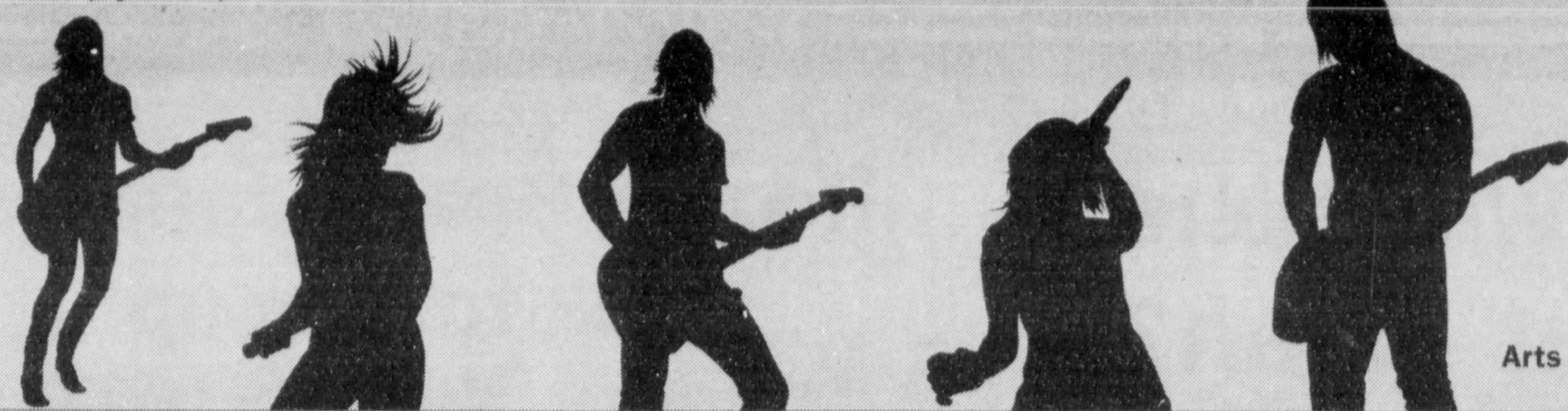
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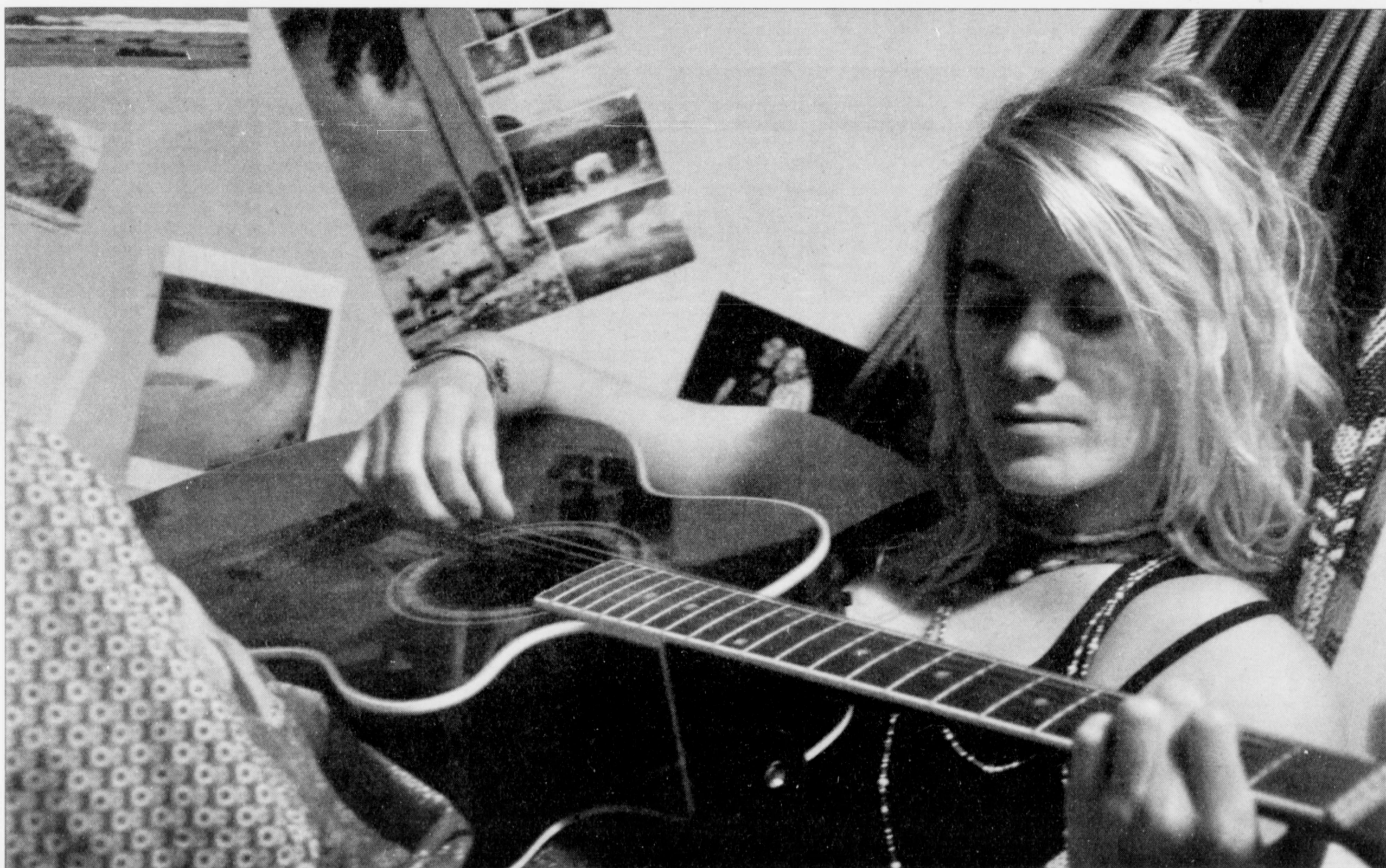


a&e
arts and entertainment

Arts and Entertainment Editor: Emilie Egger
Arts and Entertainment Designer: Milena Krayzbukh

Riding the wave of life:

student combines love of music and surfing



KRIZIA TORRES MUSTANG DAILY

Krizia Torres
MUSTANG DAILY

She smiles and people catch the wonderful disease and smile back. She laughs and the whole world lights up. Whether or not she's aware of her positive impact on people, Cal Poly agricultural business senior and recording artist Hayley Maynard is loving life.

Finding time between juggling 28 units, getting in her daily run and surf, mountain biking, volunteering as a Spanish teacher at Bishop's Peak Teach Elementary School, working at the Cal Poly ropes course, doing evening yoga and spending quality fun time with her roommates, Maynard also writes music.

She has been playing the piano since kindergarten when her parents first enrolled her in lessons. But the first time Maynard picked up a guitar was a more dramatic story.

"I got into a really bad rock climbing accident at the end of my freshman year," she said.

"I fell 15 feet, shattered my leg and was in a cast for eight months. I couldn't do anything and life sucked. So I would crutch down to the beach every day and taught myself how to play guitar. I played on the beach every day."

A Laguna Beach native, she just released her first CD titled "Tentatively at Ten." But unlike most albums, the proceeds will go to a bigger cause than just paying for Maynard's rent and personal expenses.

One hundred-percent of the album's proceeds go to several Save the Ocean Foundations like Surfrider and Save Trestles, a Southern California volunteer program protecting the well-known surf spot Trestles.

The idea came to Maynard last year when she spent three quarters backpacking and exploring in Central America. "I just did my own thing," she said about her decision to leave the study abroad program she was enrolled in and travel on her own.

Besides music, surfing took most of Maynard's time in Central America. Spending most of the days paddling around for waves to ride, she looked around at her surroundings and was horrified at what she saw.

"The ocean waters there are so badly contaminated. People were getting sick, the ocean water was so bad," Maynard said.

Since sitting around and doing nothing is not an option for Maynard, she decided to do something about what she saw and combined her love for music with her appreciation for nature to make a difference.

She picked up her guitar and ukulele, tinkered melodic chords on the keyboard, brushed up on her already fluent Spanish, raised up her soothing, angelic voice and sang.

"I wouldn't like to say I'm like somebody else, but I suppose I could be like Joni Mitchell or Jewel. It's mostly pretty mellow acoustic stuff," Maynard said about her music style.

While some of her songs were written while she was in Costa Rica last year, others date all the way back to Maynard's early high school years. For example, one of her songs, "Extraordinary Girl" took her six years to write.

"It was definitely hard to write because... it means a lot to me. I never wanted it to be in just one form. I wanted it to be expressive of all the emotions I've ever felt anytime I've ever sung it, which is really hard to do. I don't even know if I like it that much," she said.

Language is one tool that Maynard uses in her album. As a

Spanish minor, she sings some of her songs in Spanish.

She says she owes her language fluency to her family. "My aunt is from Guatemala and she pretty much raised me when I was growing up. She was super crucial to my Spanish and really encouraged my learning," she said.

One of her favorite songs on her album, "Pas y amor," is sung entirely in Spanish and hits on topics of war and need for balance. The chorus of the song translates to "Where did you learn to fight in a war? Did you learn it at home or did you learn it abroad?" Maynard wrote it a few years ago when the war in Iraq was escalating.

"It just talks about how we need both sides; we need black and we need white and we need there to be harmony and accord in the world for things to work out. How much more are we going to lose in this world before we realize that a harmony does exist?" she said.

"It's just way mellow music that keeps you centered," she said.

With the entire revenues from her CDs going to the cause, Maynard said, "You're not only helping the oceans when you're buying this CD but you're also helping yourself because you get to listen to some cool music."

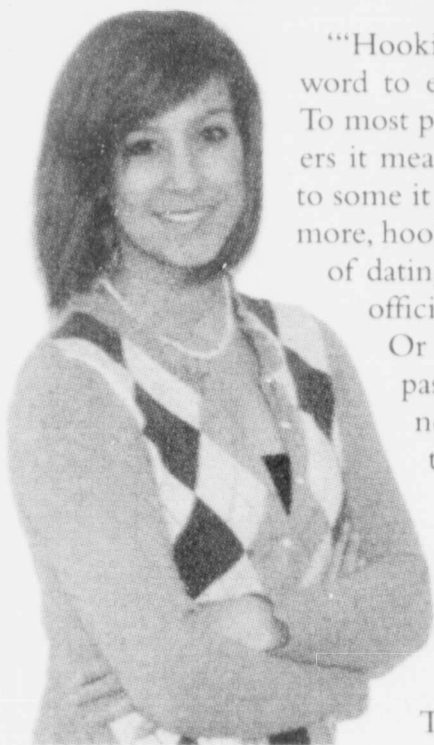
Maynard's album is on sale on iTunes, in record stores in downtown San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay and Orange County, and she's currently working on a Web site.

And what's in store for Maynard besides the success of her album's efforts and plans to graduate in June?

"If I could, I would surf, run and play soccer everyday. At the end of the day, (I would want to) just play guitar for the sunset and drink a beer and then just wake up early and do it all over the next day," Maynard said with a smile.

sex column

Hooking-up: what the hell does that mean?



"Hooking-up" is the most confusing word to ever grace Cal Poly's campus. To most people it means kissing, to others it means a little more than that and to some it means sex. To confuse matters more, hooking-up can also be some sort of dating term, like a precursor to an official boyfriend-girlfriend title. Or it may be used to describe a past semi-relationship that was never titled i.e. "Oh yes, we used to hook-up." So how is a student to know the exact status of his or her hook-up?

To address this uncertainty I am going to attempt to define hooking-up for the betterment of Cal Poly. There should be one uniform

explanation in order to unify our campus communication. To make this expression most efficient it should only be used for situations involving kissing and a little more. If you smooched someone while sleazy dancing, that's all you did. You kissed. Don't try to glorify it with a complicated description. Tweens do that in middle school, so quit confusing people by using the word hook-up.

Kissing and a little more sexual activity is the perfect opportunity to use 'hooked-up.' You did something more than kiss, but you didn't have sex. This leaves a variety of options available, so instead of divulging details, you can simply, and appropriately say you hooked-up. In this context, it is used for convenience. It is much easier to say this catch

see Sex, page 10

music column

Rockin' Sparks teaches Jack to man up

Ron and Russell Mael: they're brothers and they have been rockin' hella hard for hella years as Sparks. Like, for 37 or something. This is their 21st studio album and "Exotic Creatures of the Deep" is as enjoyable as every one of their other albums. Even though the brothers are slightly below and slightly above the age of 60, they look as if they have aged about five years if you compare cover art from the '70s. The only difference is that Russell has a haircut and Ron has gone from a toothbrush moustache to a pencil moustache. Despite these changes, the band maintains their rock 'n' roll abilities and keeps things saucy and teaches me that God helps those who help themselves.

Before listening to "Exotic Creatures of the Deep," I could not figure out for what sort of self-loathing reason I had taken to drinking a seemingly endless supply of Four Lokos and wine despite a quite debilitating but, most assuredly, non-contagious illness. Initially I, and most likely you, would have assumed that it was because I lacked self-respect or something pitiful like that. But that's too simple and I'm an evolved creature. I'm no longer the boy who was going to write about the new Andrew Bird album (great) and talk about how he was my shoulder to cry on in high school. Nope. I've matured. Instead of hiding out in my room with my headphones on, sobbing about how hard things are, my friends call me, I put on pants, down some scotch and see "Paul Blart: Mall Cop" and then go to The Library and grind on everything and everyone. I still complain, but I pretend like I'm joking. If

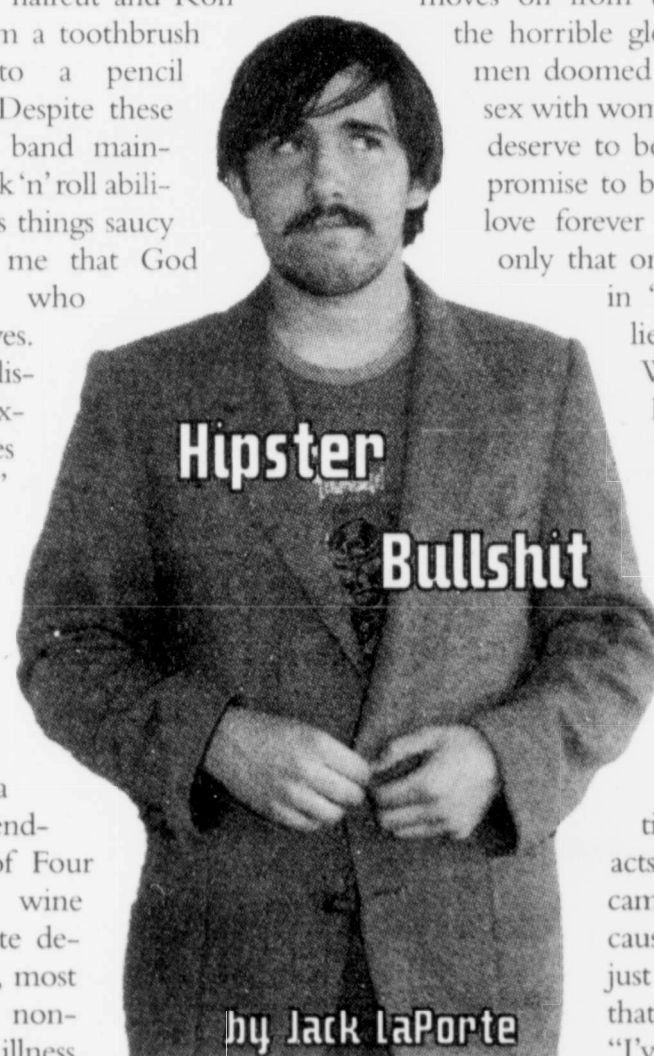
that sounds sad to you, than you need to listen to this album.

In the second track entitled "Good Morning," our hero wakes up from a night of drinking and accidentally saying clever things to a woman who decided to sleep with him. He thanks God "for something rare as this. What surely must have been a holy night of bliss. Gratitude for having thought of me. I know your time is tight, and yet you thought of me." The album

moves on from there, singing the horrible glory of lonely men doomed to accidental sex with women they don't deserve to be with. They promise to be true and to love forever and to love only that one special girl

in "I Can't Believe That You Would Fall For All The Crap In This Song." And, finally, they begrudge the times they could have been "forgetting and regretting of lurid acts that never came to be" because they didn't just stick it out that one night in "I've Never Been High"

"Exotic Creatures of the Deep" is a comical and dark album that trophies pseudo-intellectualism and is thoroughly concerned with being liked. The band doesn't care if you love them as long as you like them. They repeat this over and over again throughout the album and end with "Likeable." Just to be that likeable guy at parties, when people are hooking up all around, but you aren't. You are there for comic relief. You help people dance. You make slightly uncomfortable comments. But under no circumstances do you disappoint your audience, no matter how embarrassing things get.



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Hidden hideaway offers herbal remedies to locals

Alisha Axsom

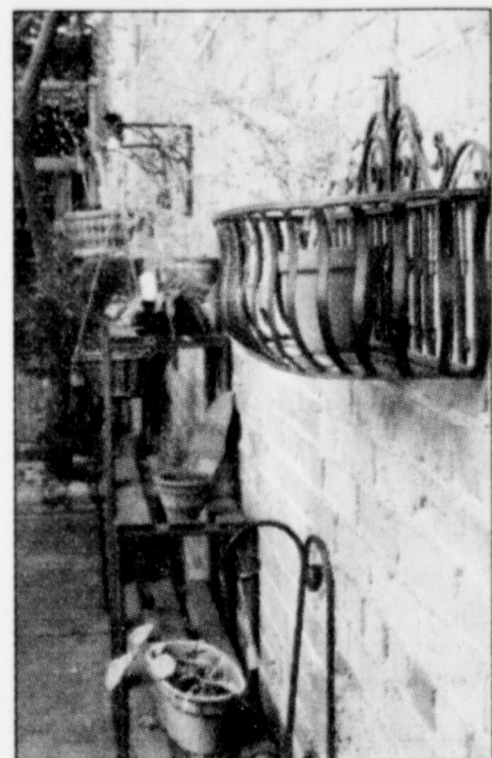
MUSTANG DAILY

Tucked away behind local businesses, San Luis Obispo has its own secret garden which few know about. This hidden hideaway is the organic herb shop owned by Cal Poly graduate Kirstin Sherritt.

Located down a small alley off Garden Street, The Secret Garden is an outdoor shop that sells organic herbs, spices, specialty teas and is home to several local plant varieties. Sherritt also sells local artists' work and other locally produced products.



PHOTOS BY KRISTEN HAYS MUSTANG DAILY



"Most people are pretty enchanted (when they come to The Secret Garden)," Sherritt said. "The setting is unusual, being outdoors, (and there is) the sensual aspect of being able to open jars and smell things. The herbs are so fresh that a lot of people are surprised."

The Secret Garden opened in August 2004 and Sherritt, who originally started the business with a partner, said her personal goal was to create a resource for herbal medicine and plants. Sherritt also wanted her store to be a place where people could support local artists and vendors.

Sherritt specializes in herbal medicinal blends that are used to make tea, and also sells organic black, green, red and white loose-leaf teas. All are pesticide-free and sustainable. Customers buy individual types of herbs and spices or Sherritt creates unique blends to treat headaches, hormone imbalance or to relieve stress.

Tinctures, which are alcohol extracts that are slightly more concentrated than the herbs, can be used instead of making tea.

Sherritt said she prefers to take herbs in tea form but many people like tinctures if they "aren't into the tradition or ceremony of making tea."

Terri Knowlton, of Paso Robles, is a regular customer who likes to wander in to the shop when she drives down to San Luis Obispo every couple of weeks. She usually purchases tinctures but is considering trying some of the various teas offered.

"I've been thinking about getting the bulk tea versus the tea bags because I know that's so wasteful," Knowlton said. "This (tea) tastes better anyway."

The Secret Garden draws in a wide variety of customers, ranging from gardeners, to people who like to use aromatherapy around the house to chefs to people who enjoy cooking at home, Sherritt said.

"I get all ages and both genders," she said. "There's no demographic for herbs."

The only "advertising" Sherritt does is by word of mouth. Once someone discovers the fresh herbs and spices available, they usually become a regular and bring back friends and family members.

Knowlton said she knew the shop was there simply from walking by and seeing the signs. The name of the place drew her in.

"I have the association with the 'Secret Garden' thing," Knowlton said. "I just loved that book as a kid. I identify with that."

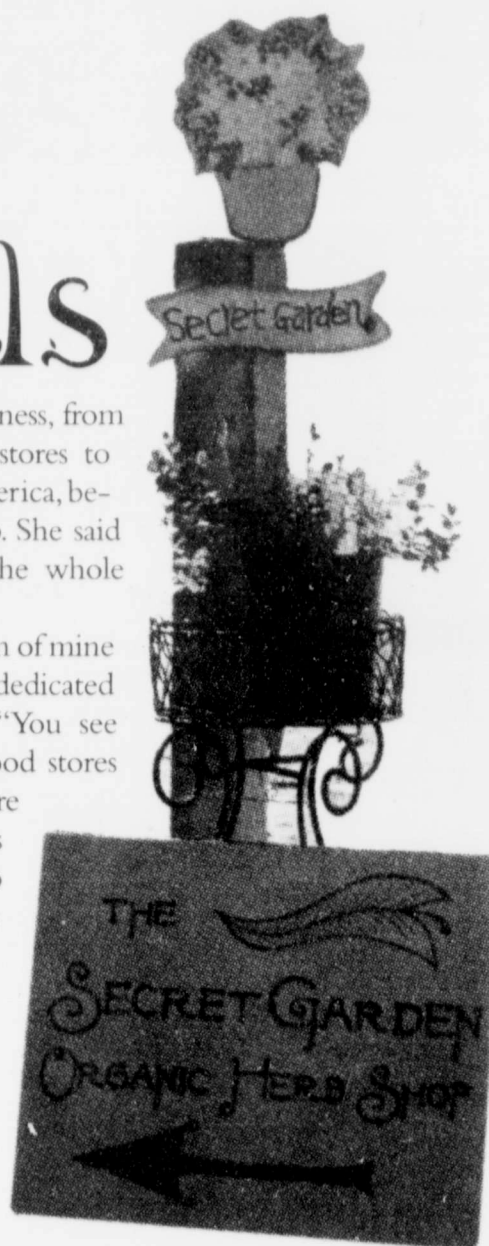
Although she graduated with a degree in literature, Sherritt had lots of experience with all differ-

ent sides of the herb business, from working at health food stores to herb farms in Central America, before she opened her shop. She said she "fell in love" with the whole idea of herbs.

"This is kind of a dream of mine to make a specific store dedicated to herbs," Sherritt said. "You see little sections in health food stores and it's nice that there are resources like that, but it's really nice to be able to specialize in it because the quality is so great."

She has not had any formal herb education and considers herself self-taught, but Sherritt said she has had many teachers over the years.

see Garden, page 10



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KRISTEN HAYS MUSTANG DAILY

Garden

continued from page 9

Being a retail shop owner has allowed her to meet people who already know how to use herbs and they often share secrets and recipes with each other.

"I love herbs, I love to talk about herbs and I love introducing people to herbs," said Sherritt, who instructs customers on how to use the products they buy if they do not know already.

Sherritt said she goes through phases when it comes to her own favorite herbs, but right now she enjoys Rhodiola, which grows in a few places including mountain-tops. It helps keep a person clear and alert and improves memory and brain function, Sherritt said.

"If you look at it metaphorically, it's hanging off the mountain cliff getting whipped around, adjusting to different climates and that's kind of what it does for your body with a focus on the nervous system and the brain," Sherritt said.

Top-sellers at The Secret Garden include cinnamon and Kava Kava, which is popular among students. Kava Kava can be purchased in powder or root form and is used to relieve stress and anxiety. It also helps a person focus mentally and can reduce pain.

The Secret Garden will soon be moving to a space behind The Gold Concept jewelry store on Higuera Street. Being near the creek will be a more central and pleasant location because people will not have to walk down an alley, Sherritt said. The theme of The Secret Garden will remain the same since it will still be relatively hidden.

Sex

continued from page 8

phrase than give details about your quarter of a hand job and three-quarters of a blow job situation.

The big reason hooked-up should not be used for sex is because if you're not mature enough to say it, you shouldn't be doing it. Please don't use an ambiguous phrase to describe a pretty clear act. It was in or it was out. We can use big-kid words like "sex" now that we are in college.

Finally, I would like to address using hooking-up as a relationship

term. This is the biggest misnomer of all. This sort of labeling makes little sense, whether you are using it to describe a current or a past fling. Hooking-up does not explain the depths of your sexual involvement, nor is it in any way a definition of your commitment.

Telling someone you are hooking-up basically says that it's exclusive, unless otherwise disclosed. In this context, hooking-up really is an incredibly awkward phase. It may be a short phase of general togetherness that happens prior to some official and public commitment. It could also be an extensive period of time where there is no label or commitment. The longer the hook-

ing-up phase, the more strenuous the relationship becomes. Curiosity lingers, limitations are self-inflicted and frustration ultimately strikes before there is some weird quasi-break-up from your unofficial relationship.

Maybe these definitions are bordering on bitter, but I'm sure everyone has or knows someone who has been a victim of a hooking-up miscommunication. It is critical that when talking about hooking-up a clear definition is chosen for the context of the story. It is also important that in a hooking-up relationship both participants are aware of the expectations of the other. So let's all try to use hooking-up responsibly.

Denise Nilan is a journalism senior and the Mustang Daily's new sex columnist.

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movie column

Rourke's "Wrestler" is performance of a lifetime

The Wrestler - 2008

***** star rating (highest rating)

Director: Darren Aronofsky

Starring: Mickey Rourke, Evan Rachel Wood, Marisa Tomei

Oscar Nominations: Best Actor (Rourke), Best Supporting Actress (Tomei)

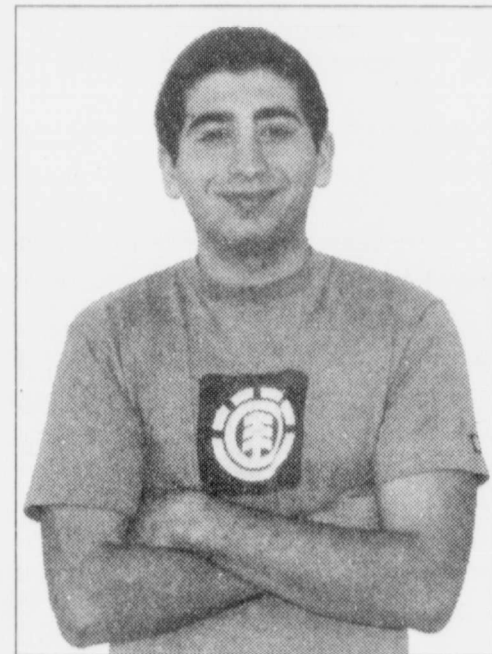
People enjoy a good comeback story. They love seeing a man who was once a hero experience hard times, only to bounce back in top form. If ever there was a character more deserving of a resurrection, it is Randy "The Ram" Robinson. A battered, lonely and broken man who in his own words deserves to be ignored, Randy consistently reminds himself that wrestling is basically the only thing he has to live for, despite undergoing a transition from having his face on T-shirts and performing in front of thousands of devoted fans to his current state in a low budget wrestling circuit.

Mickey Rourke, in what will be considered the performance of a lifetime, plays the tragic hero. His portrayal has already recently been recognized through both a Golden Globe Award and Oscar nomination for Best Actor. Despite this year's stiff competition (namely Sean Penn), Rourke may actually run away with the award at the 81st Academy Awards.

One major aspect of the film that makes it so astonishing to experience is the obvious parallel between the lives of "The Ram" and Mickey himself. If you're not familiar with his earlier work, well...get familiar. In the mid '80s and early '90s, Rourke was considered to be the next Robert DeNiro, through acclaimed performances in films like "The Pope of Greenwich Village" (1984), "Angel Heart" (1987) and "Barfly" (1987).

His exuberance and energy on screen made his work so believable, creating characters that audiences were constantly rooting for. Like his broken down character, Rourke too was once a young star, and experienced fame and respect in Hollywood, only to throw it all away.

Through the alienation of his peers and involvement in a number of difficult situations (DUI charges, spousal abuse), along with a short stint as a professional boxer, he slowly began to fade away. Rourke went from being



a leading man with striking physical features, to a has been who only occasionally was granted supporting roles in mediocre movies (his last hit being Sin City), not to mention a change in his appearance to what now reflects an obvious state deterioration.

Darren Aronofsky, who to say the least, is a unique and controversial director (Requiem for a Dream, π), took another major risk by placing his movie in the hands of someone like Mickey, of whom prior to this film no studio would support.

Despite the fact that Aronofsky has never made a movie in the past that even resembles "The Wrestler", he succeeds. His effectiveness in exposing the behind the scenes and backstage aspect to professional wrestling only adds to the movie's sense of realism.

I cared deeply about Randy "The Ram" Robinson, maybe even more than I have cared about any other character in the past. I also find myself constantly telling people how much I always did and even more so now do believe in Mickey Rourke.

There are a number of things I like about this film, including the supporting cast (Evan Rachel Wood, Marisa Tomei) and its indie feel. However, the one thing that stands out for me is the evident chemistry between a ballsy director and a desperate actor, who both obviously put everything they had into this film knowing full well that there was a minimal chance for success.

Alex Petrosian is a biological sciences freshman and the Mustang Daily's new film reviewer.

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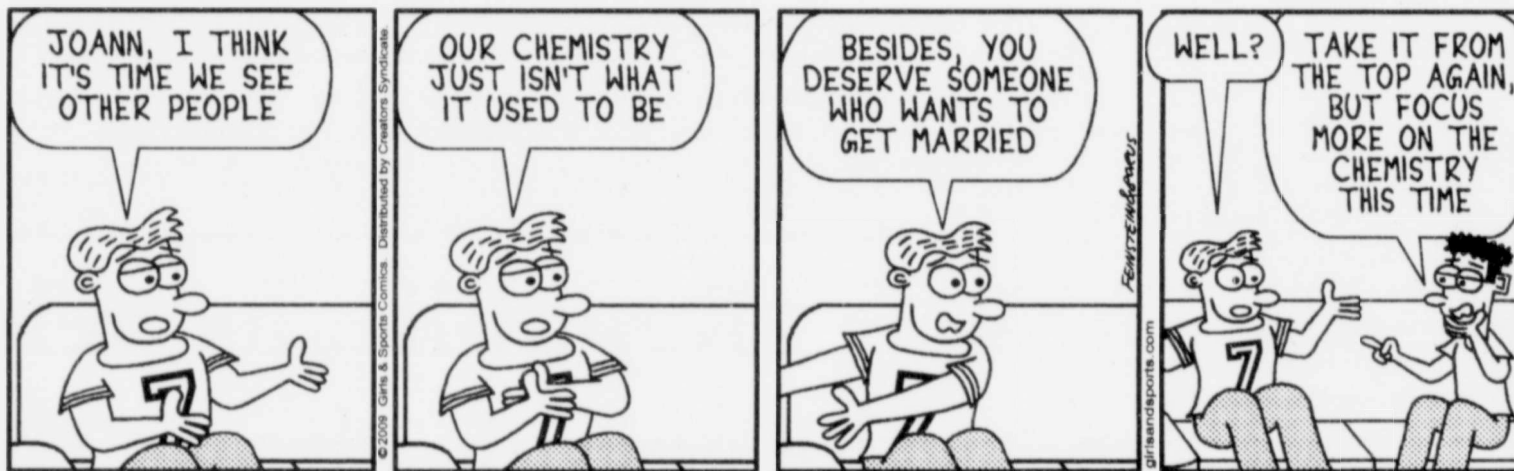
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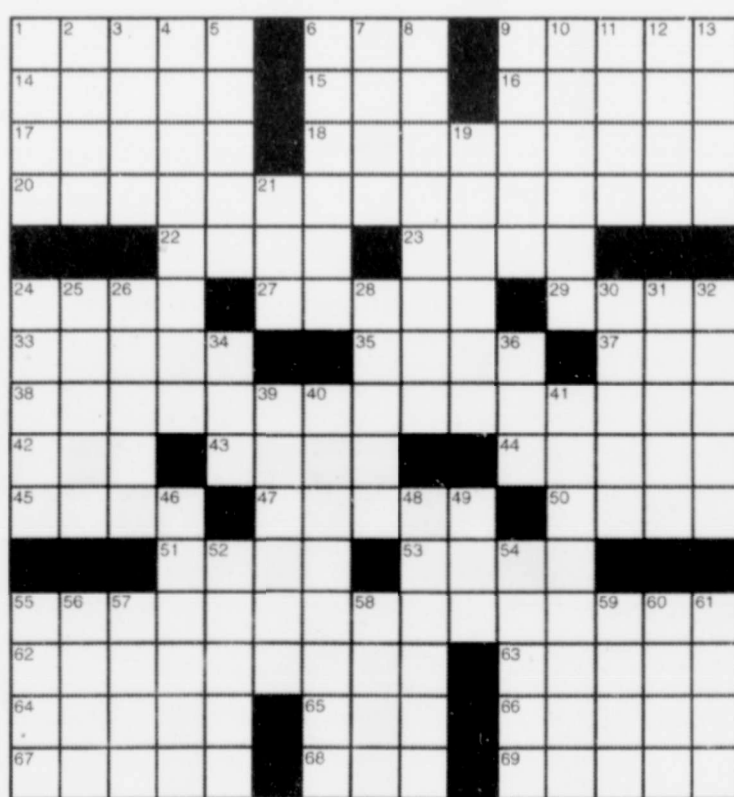
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Girls & Sports by Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein



- Across**
- Choker component
 - Music pioneered by Byron Lee and the Dragonaires
 - secretary
 - Rummage
 - Suffer
 - Bygone Olds
 - Sorkin who created "The West Wing"
 - Section in a record store
 - Chestnut-colored mustang offspring?
 - Its coat of arms includes a vicuña
 - "Rule, Britannia" composer Thomas
 - Nuts
 - Like the space around a first-class seat, say
 - Con
 - Pitcher Hideo Nomo's birthplace
 - "No ____" ("Beats me")
 - Ripen
 - Main dedicatee of an Austin cathedral?
 - "Talk to ____," Pedro Almodóvar film
 - Time-honored name?
 - Food processor setting
 - Torpedoed
 - David ____ founder of the Libertarian Party
 - A.A.A. jobs
 - were
 - Brick maker
 - Hefty invoice for boots and spurs?
 - On the fence
 - Dashboard item
 - Emasculate
 - Embarrassed, perhaps
 - Last name of Kipling's Kim
 - Fresh
 - Balls (snack cakes)
 - Masters champ of 1949, 1952 and 1954
- Down**
- Grouch
 - Epithet that's an anagram of 60-Down
 - Big do
 - Snail
 - Pasta salad ingredient
 - Pelvic bone
 - Overseas shipping unit
 - Star of Broadway's "QED," 2001-02
 - Brick placer
 - Walker, Cooper and others
 - Art ____
 - Asia's ____ Sea
 - Shed
 - Present for viewing ... or prevent from being viewed
 - Bust holder
 - Ness and Tay
 - Dublin-born film star Milo
 - terrier
 - Dot
 - The City of a Thousand Minarets
 - Predecessor of Ford
 - Doles (out)
 - Org. founded by Samuel Gompers
 - Saharan viper



Puzzle by Eric Tentarelli

- Garb for Robin Hood and his band
- Trips through rain forests, maybe
- Famously fast route
- Home of Fort Scott National Historic Site
- Light ratio in astronomy
- Prefix with romantic
- Like some silences
- Spinners
- Prey for lions
- College in New Rochelle, N.Y.
- Mall conveniences
- Cousin of a tree creeper
- Family name suffix in taxonomy
- Money that's an anagram of 2-Down
- Dishwasherful

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Mustang Daily

"Are guys allowed to say 'adorable'?"

MUSTANG DAILY OPINION/EDITORIAL

Thursday, January 29, 2009

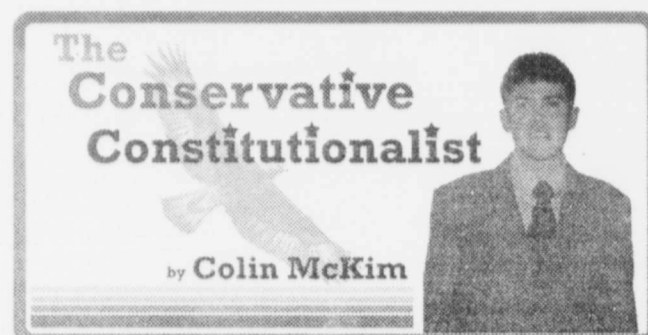
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Increasing foreign aid is unpatriotic



Last week, President Obama posted his new administration's official agenda on the White House Web site. Much spending is planned in an attempt to stimulate the U.S. economy, but apparently Obama thinks he can stimulate the world economy as well through his plan to double foreign aid. The new administration's agenda states that they plan to "...embrace the Millennium Development Goal of cutting extreme poverty and hunger around the world in half by 2015, and they will double our foreign assistance to achieve that goal. This will help the world's weakest states build healthy and educated communities, reduce poverty, develop markets and generate wealth."

The American president has substantial influence over the country's foreign aid agenda through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), an executive branch agency founded during the Kennedy administration. U.S. federal foreign aid has continuously increased over the decades to where it currently stands at \$25 billion annually.

Considering the historical and current situations surrounding foreign aid, increasing federal donations to foreign nations and the globalist United Nations to accomplish lofty goals likely will result in mediocre success at best.

More importantly, the policy of federal foreign aid constitutes an injustice to the American people.

At a time when the national debt stands at over \$10.5 trillion and many Americans are feeling the

pinch of the current economic downturn, an agenda which promotes sending current or future generations' tax money to foreign people is downright unpatriotic.

Obama said in a speech on his federal foreign aid spending plan that the spending would be increased to \$50 billion annually over a four year period. This \$50 billion plan would equate to one-tenth of the projected 2009 federal discretionary spending budget other than defense.

Stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS is foremost on Obama's aid agenda. Recently a BBC reporter in South Africa found teenagers smoking anti-retroviral HIV/AIDS drugs to get high. Should Americans work hard and pay taxes so that Africans can get high off these drugs, donated in large quantities by programs such as USAID?

Corruption and misuse of aid are legendary in Africa and other nations around the world. The more aid is given, it seems, the more it is misused: a fleet of 1,800 four-wheel-drive vehicles for the Ugandan Ministry of Health staff instead of gloves and basic medicines, a \$2.5 million party for the king in Swaziland, governments selling food and medical aid to retailers... the list goes on ad nauseam.

A system in which one government steals from its citizens to give to a government who in turn steals both the gift and from the poor is clearly not a solution to solving poverty and disease. Private charities operating directly in impoverished regions succeed in improving the quality of life for those who truly need help without subsidizing corrupt government excesses. Quantified, Americans gave \$306.39 billion to charity in 2007 and over one-quarter of the U.S. population volunteers. Americans are a generous people; without volunteers and philanthropists America would not resemble what it does today.

The federal government has no obligation nor

authority to be benevolent to foreigners, according to the Constitution. In fact, the principle author of the Constitution, James Madison, once said about relief for French refugees, "I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents."

Yet gradually over time the wisdom of the Founding Fathers and the foundation of the Constitution have crumbled in the pursuit of a new world order "I want us to pay our fair share to the global fund," Obama said in 2007, a sentiment that has permeated politics. But, Mr. Obama, America is neither beholden to foreigners nor U.N. budgets.

As a sovereign nation bound by the laws of the U.S. Constitution, Americans must stand up against this mentality that we belong to a global state we are obligated to support. Fairness is about protecting individual rights from the tyranny of the majority, not forming a collective-majority-rule system to promote equality.

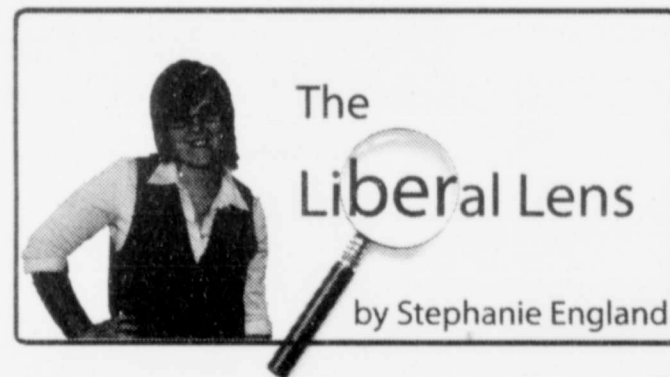
Individuals may, as per the 10th Amendment, donate to the charity of their own choosing, but not be forced to donate to some government program with historically little accountability or results.

Many basic problems need to be solved at home before we should even consider sending our philanthropy abroad. Veterans permanently disabled from fighting in the Middle East return to a government pension and charity aid inadequate to live above the American poverty line.

We must ask ourselves as citizens in the coming years if we can support a government whose agenda prioritizes unconstitutional spending over defending the general welfare and dignity of the American people.

Colin McKim is a horticulture junior and the new Mustang Daily political columnist for Thursdays.

Republicans' reluctance to get with the agenda shows they're behind the times



The fanfare is over and the work has begun on Capitol Hill. In a show of unprecedented bipartisanship, the president met with Republicans Tuesday to hear their concerns over the first major piece of legislation to come from Obama's administration — and it is a huge proposal.

Obama's \$825 billion recovery plan invests in arts programs, physics, green energy, children's health care, Pell grants, nation-wide infrastructure rebuilding and education — all key elements of Obama's campaign, plus more.

In truth, the major aspects of this stimulus package are no different from the platform of change that Obama ran on. If Republicans want a definition of the hope and change that America voted for, this stimulus package is it.

For the past two weeks, Republicans have made their objections heard on all of the major news stations in America, pressure-selling us the same old 1980s Pinto rhetoric from the glory days of their Gingrich-Rovian past.

Representative Jerry Lewis (R-Calif.) sputtered out his concerns over whether some of the proposals will actually stimulate the economy, and on the Jan. 18 "Meet the Press" his worries were highlighted for comment from Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel. Among Lewis' concerns over Obama's stimulus package is a \$15.6 billion increase in Pell

grants for college students.

Emanuel expressed surprise that the increase in Pell grant funding would be flagged as an area of concern because, he said, "the ability to provide people the opportunity to go to college in a era where you earn what you learn is human capital investment."

Without the commitment of financial aid, the promise of an education means nothing, and once that particular leveling of our society is removed, the gap between the rich and the poor will become even more suffocating.

With the California budget still in crisis and the strength of the California State University system hanging in the balance, Republicans questioning the necessity of increasing Pell grant funding should fuel outrage — especially when the questions come from a Republican Representative from our very own state.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi addressed Republican House Minority Leader John Boehner and his minions' concerns over the \$300 billion in aid that will be used to shore up state budget deficits around the country.

On Sunday's "This Week" she said, "The states are in terrible fiscal budget crisis now and part of it, what we do for children's health, education and some of those elements, are to help the states meet their financial needs."

While I am confident that the California budget crisis will not remain too far past its current 83-day quagmire before some solid proposals are hashed out again, I also think it is worthwhile to point out where our legislators' hearts and minds are right now.

I do not hear state legislators or Gov. Schwarzenegger himself deferring their salaries in order to ensure that the important state programs remain untouched. While we students — the future

of California — are wondering whether our next grant will come as promised, state legislators and the Governor remain in their lofty offices bickering over ideology.

In fact, the Governor created a new position with a six-figure salary for former Assemblywoman Nicole Parra just last week.

I for one will take a much closer look at who I vote for the next time California legislators' seats are up for re-election. You can bet I won't be voting for the incumbents.

However, we can see this crisis improve with the passing of Obama's recovery plan. Almost a third of the money that Obama seeks as part of his economic stimulus plan is going to the states, and I think that if the California budget gets some help from the federal government, they may be more likely to fund education at all levels and the grants that would otherwise be delayed.

The only Republican concern over Obama's recovery plan I saw as legitimate was the extravagant funding for Planned Parenthood, but President Obama and House Democrats threw out the funding for that on Tuesday. Aside from that, the Republicans' arguments are proving to be contrived efforts to hinder the positive process of change in America, like an annoying, unexplainable whirring in your car engine.

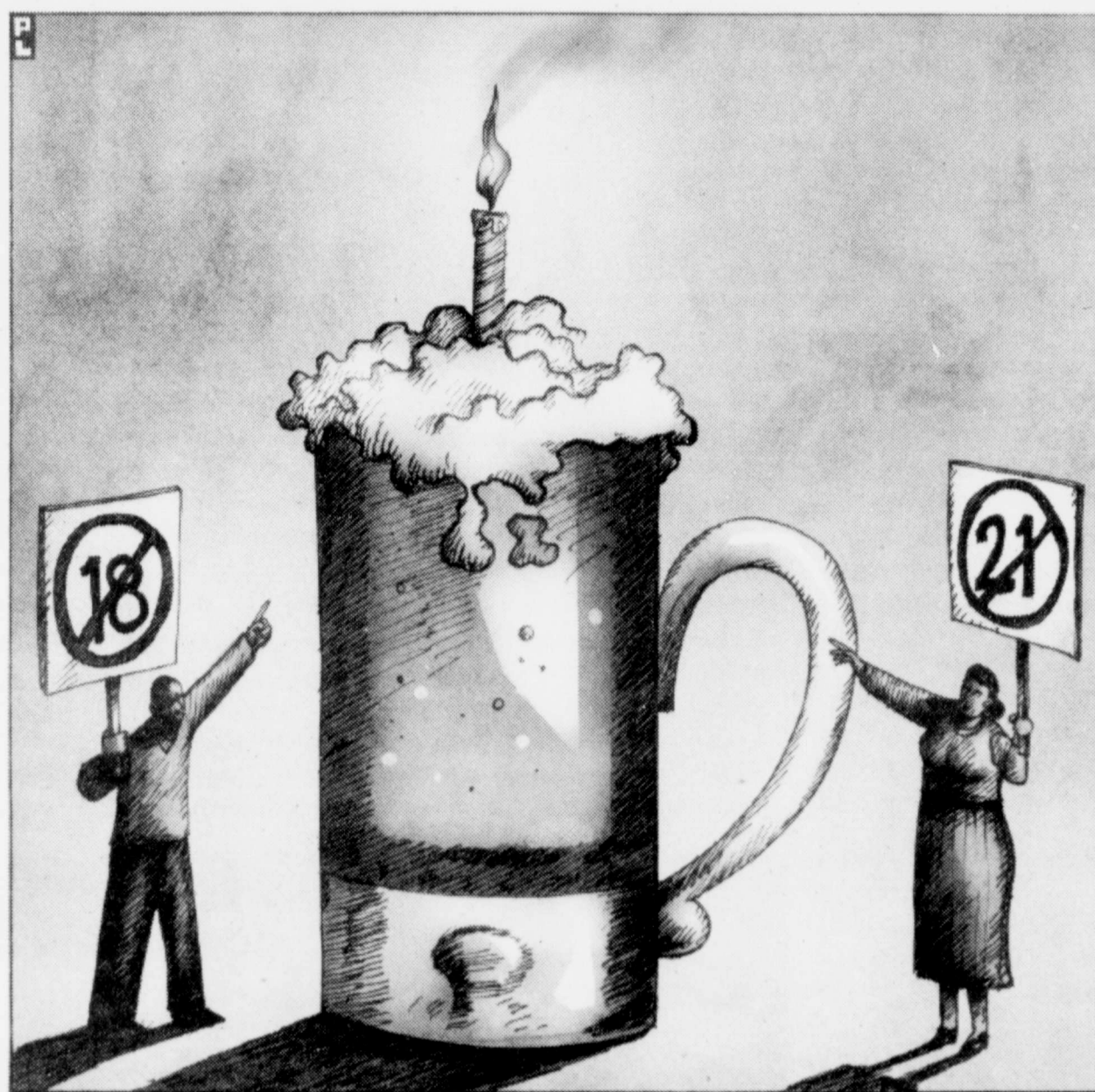
Whatever happens regarding Obama's recovery plan, Republicans just need to trade in their 1980s Pinto clunkers for talking points from this epoch, otherwise they will be left stranded in the deserts of their rhetoric while Obama, free-thinking Republicans, Democrats and the vast majority of Americans speed ahead in our 2010 Honda Hybrid Insights.

Stephanie England is an English junior and Mustang Daily political columnist.

dueling perspectives

The ultimate college debate: should the U.S. lower the drinking age?

Young men ages 18 to 20 self-reported driving while alcohol-impaired more than any other age group... there is a reason our insurance rates are so high.



PAUL LACHINE NEWSART

Kids know that it is illegal to buy alcohol but have absolutely no problem consuming it. In fact, having the drinking age set to 21 adds to the mystique of drinking.

New drivers + new drinkers = more alcohol-related deaths

OK, before I get massive amounts of hate mail, I want to say that I know there are plenty of responsible 18-year-olds who work hard and deserve the option of coming home to a frosty pale ale beer after a long day.

No one deserves this more than the people who put their lives on the line to protect this great nation from threats: the brave men and women of the armed forces, who of course can be drafted at age 18.

But to lower the drinking age to 18 will only induce more binge drinking, which will result in more deaths. No whats, ifs, ands or buts about it.

Just think about it. How many times were you left dry when someone of age wasn't around to buy it for you? If millions more get access to alcohol legally, there will be a spike in underage drinking and more drunk drivers.

Many people drink before they're of age — I did — but to use this as an argument displays a person's ignorance of how the world operates. All you need to do is talk to police officers, doctors, nurses and family members who see the aftermath of irresponsible drinking by teenagers.

Believe me, I've heard every reason why the drinking age should be lowered. Here are some of my favorites:

- 1) The rest of the world drinks at 18 or younger
- 2) How are we going to be responsible if they won't give us responsibility?
- 3) If we can die fighting for our country at 18 then why can't we drink at 18?

This is why: the truth is that we are not like the rest of the world.

In France, England or Mexico for that matter, where most peoples' modes of transportation are bicycles, buses, trains, subways, rails and cabs, a lower drinking age can work. But in America, where the most recent United Nations statistical yearbook shows there are 765

motor vehicles per 1,000 people, it means that more intoxicated young people will result in more deaths on the road. It's that simple.

Even President Barack Obama agrees. Love him or hate him, he understands what will happen if more young people are allowed to drink.

"I know it drives you nuts. But I'm not going to lower the drinking age," Obama told a young veteran on MTV, and referenced the drop in deaths due to alcohol when the age was set at 21 in 1984.

Still don't believe me?

According to the Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2006, alcohol-impaired driving accidents accounted for nearly one-third of all traffic accidents in the U.S.

Young men ages 18 to 20 self-reported driving while alcohol-impaired more than any other age group. What does that tell us about how responsible we are? There is a reason our insurance rates are so high.

And the argument that we can volunteer to fight and die for our country would make sense... if people age 18 to 21 were volunteering in record numbers. The truth is we're not, so to change it for the rest of us is just plain selfish. The reality is that there is no draft in place or the likelihood of a draft soon.

Let's be grown-ups and admit that we have not fully matured. Even if you think you have, statistics show that we are the least responsible age group, from voting to driving. So unless our lifestyles, society and transportation options change, we're stuck waiting three more years before we can head downtown for pint night.

Omar Sanchez is a journalism senior, news page designer and Mustang Daily reporter.

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Teenagers will drink anyway — take away the mystery

In the U.S., people can legally smoke cigarettes, serve in the armed forces, vote, get arrested, have sex and gamble in some casinos at the age of 18, yet they cannot drink.

The National Minimum Drinking Age Act, which required all states to enforce a minimum drinking age of 21, was signed into law by Ronald Reagan in 1984, with the strong urging of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

The purpose of this legislation was to take the right to drink away from young adults and thus reduce the number of drinking-related accidents. The problem is that current alcohol-related statistics involving teenagers do not look good.

Sixty percent of all teenage automobile accidents are alcohol-related. About 70 percent of all teenagers drink alcohol, including one in 10 between the ages of 12 and 13, according to the National Highway

Traffic Safety Administration.

Wait — does this mean that 70 percent of our country's future leaders are committing crimes regularly? Is the U.S. breeding a generation of criminals? Not quite. The problem is that in our society, kids know it is illegal to buy alcohol, but have absolutely no problem consuming it. In fact, having the drinking age set to 21 adds to the mystique of drinking.

Teenagers are going to drink no matter what and the statistics prove this. The problem with not being able to legally drink until the age of 21 is that kids are under a zero tolerance, "alcohol is evil" policy for their entire lives and then, randomly, after 7,665 days of life, they are told to drink up and it is one big happy celebration. With this social

mindset, problems occur.

First, teenagers do not learn about drinking in moderation. In the U.S., about two-thirds of teenagers who drink admit to binge drinking, which is defined as drinking five or more drinks in a few hours. The movie "Superbad" portrays the teenage drinking mindset very well. Teenagers are desperate to get their hands on alcohol and when they do, they drink as much as they can, as if it's a precious resource.

Secondly, when teenagers do turn 21, they tend to go nuts. In a survey of 2,518 college students, 34 percent of men and 24 percent of women surveyed reported consuming 21 drinks or more on their 21st birthdays. This is a dangerous trend. Of college-aged deaths that made news in 2006, 11 died celebrating their 21st birthdays.

When a teenager becomes an adult at the age of 18, it is a bittersweet day. For all intensive purposes they are adults, yet, for whatever reason they cannot legally drink. America should at least be consistent with its laws. If we're going to deny people the right to drink, we might as well just raise the age of all adult responsibilities to the age of 21.

The U.S. should seriously consider adopting an alcohol policy similar to that of the U.K. Lower the drinking age to 18, but don't enforce it too heavily. Make it legal for kids to have an alcoholic beverage with a meal. Young adults will start to see consumption of alcohol as a normal aspect of society instead of a deviant, reckless act. Alcohol-related deaths and accidents will potentially decrease, (but will always happen to some degree no matter what) and 18-year-olds will be able to call themselves adults with no asterisk.

Chris Jagger is a journalism senior and Mustang Daily reporter.

New men's basketball tournament celebrates mediocrity

Andrew Greif

OREGON DAILY EMERALD (U. OREGON)

There is much rejoicing today in college towns across America that feature mediocre college basketball.

Haven't you heard? There will be not only three men's postseason basketball tournaments this March, but a fourth postseason basketball tournament has been created to give 16 more teams a chance to put in their 2009-10 media guide that indeed, they played in the postseason.

So we can't get a football play-off, but new basketball tournaments pop up every year? Now they're just taunting us.

Let's take a moment to collectively scream like Dick Vitale.

America, are you really ready to watch 129 teams play postseason basketball? Let's rephrase that: America, do you actually want to watch nearly a third of Division I college basketball teams (there are 343) play in the postseason?

There are some teams out there that truly don't belong in a postseason

tournament. Some might even agree and defer to their local high school team. Most of the fans from those seasons have already sat through an entire season politely enough. Why make them suffer more?

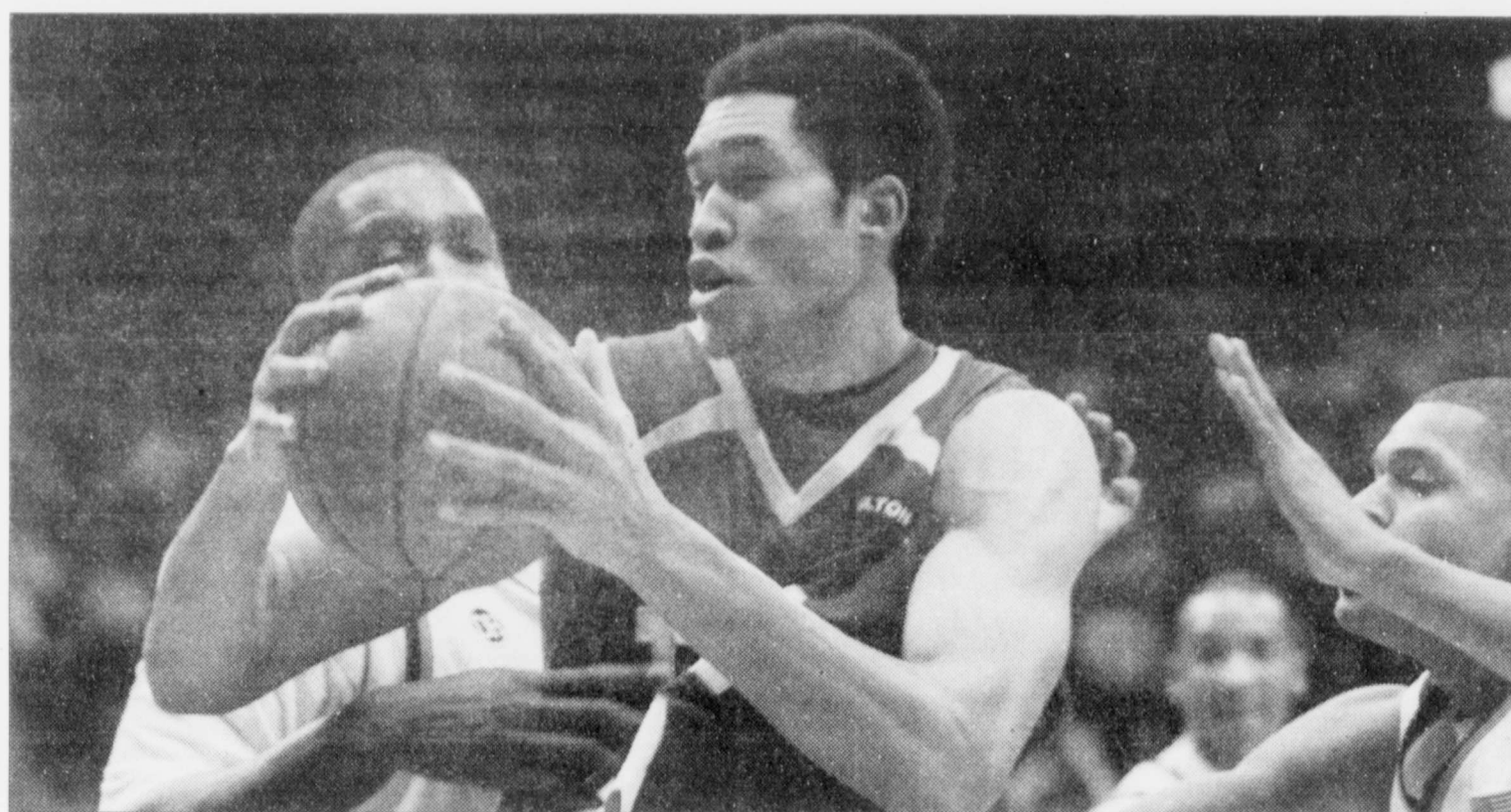
This is all happening because last season the College Basketball Invitational debuted. They invited 16 teams, as they will again this year. It begins March 17, and its best-of-three championship series could last until April 3.

Tulsa won last year. If you didn't know that before reading this, this is the one thing you have learned today.

The fourth — the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament — has emerged. It, too, will select 16 teams and will last from March 17-31.

Didn't know that? Neither did the CBI.

"We're kind of like, 'Oh really?'" said Dan Loney, a media contact for the Gazelle Group, which puts on other college basketball tournaments around the nation during the pre-season.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tulsa's Jerome Jordan is hounded by defenders. Tulsa won the inaugural College Basketball Invitational last year.

Us too, Dan.

Sure, there are a handful of teams with legitimate gripes about being left out of the NCAA Tournament, which invites 65 teams to its bracket and crowns the national champion of college basketball at its finale.

But those teams that get left out go to the 32-team National Invitational Tournament. That's it. That's the way

it should be. Two tournaments is enough. Three was OK. The CollegeInsider tournament can't even compete with the other three in the best abbreviation category. For the record, we'll go with CI.comPT. Also, there's an issue, it seems, with who gets to choose which teams. The CI.comPT says it gets to choose after the NIT and NCAA get their picks, while

Loney said, "I don't think there's going to be a pecking order."

He also said he had serious doubts both tournaments would choose one or more of the same teams.

I'm not sure ... North Dakota State will be hard to pass on.

But really, for all our sakes, stop the four tournament Madness. Otherwise you'll be inviting teams that don't belong to be on the floor come March. According to the current NCAA Ratings Percentage Index, which combines several factors and is a major component for the NCAA Tournament selection committee, those teams on the "bubble" for the CI.comPT include Portland (13-7), Texas A&M Corpus-Christi (11-9), Iowa State (12-7) and Akron (10-8). North Dakota State is No. 117 and Oregon State is somehow No. 155.

So, any chance winless-in-the-Pac-10 Oregon — RPI ranking No. 119 — gets an invite to the CBI this March, Dan?

"Well you know there's no rule that you have to be over .500 to get into the tournament," Loney said, "but no, it would certainly help."

There's always next year.

Cal Poly sports

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Q&A with coach Walsh

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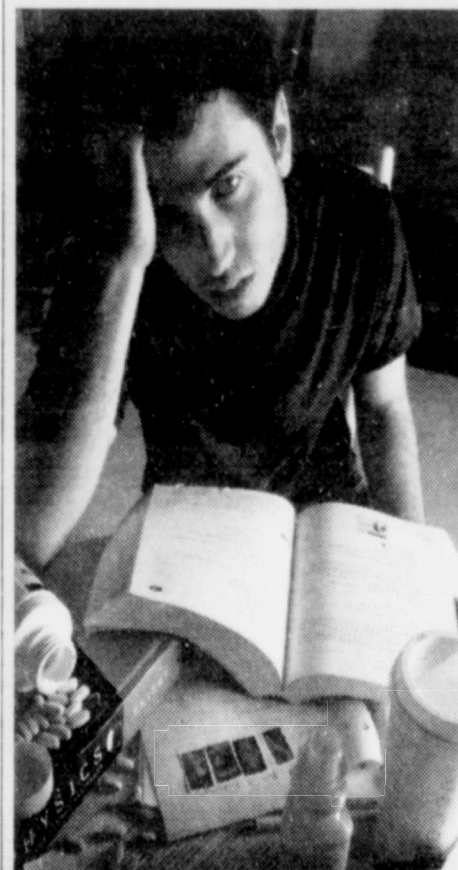
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Race

continued from page 16

just two games behind fourth place Cal State Northridge.

Cal Poly can cut that gap in half when they host the Matadors at 6 p.m. on Saturday in Mott Gym in a game that will be nationally televised by Fox Sports Network-Prime Ticket.

A main source of the Mustangs' resurgence has been the recent play of junior guard Lorenzo Keeler.

After a week in which he averaged 22 points, 4 rebounds and 1.5 assists per game, Keeler was named Big West Player of the Week.

I thought he did everything extremely well," Bromley said of Keeler's performance. "He's always been a competitor. He really did it all over the entire weekend."

Bromley said that senior forward Titus Shelton was also a big component to the Mustangs' recent success.

"Titus was the man (last) weekend," Bromley said. "He did a great job on (Pacific senior forward) Anthony Brown. The officials just let them play and it was so physical. When you saw those two it was almost like, 'This is a collision sport'."

Cal Poly will likely need the inside presence of Shelton and the hot shooting of Thomas and Keeler to beat the Matadors (7-10, 4-3) despite Cal State Northridge likely being without

leading scorer Deon Tresvant after he was arrested along with the son of Matadors' head coach Bobby Braswell and two others for allegedly stealing more than \$6,600 in merchandise from a Best Buy in Porter Ranch, Calif. earlier this month.

Still, Bromley said that while the Matadors haven't played their best basketball this year, a wounded animal is more dangerous.

"Obviously they're disappointed early," Bromley said. "They had a pretty tough schedule early on and didn't play very well. Then the thing with (Braswell's) son and Tresvant has been a distraction. But it didn't look like it (last) weekend. They beat Irvine pretty handily."

The Matadors may be recovering their swagger at the right time. At the Big West media day in October, coaches overwhelmingly picked Cal State Northridge to win the conference championship.

"We teased (Braswell) in the Big West Conference meetings this year," Bromley recalled. "We said, 'Well, we're going to pick you to finish first and second in the conference this year because you should beat everybody so badly.'"

Long Beach State is the current Big West leader.

Bromley acknowledged that Saturday's game is important but is happy with where his team is mentally.

"They're loving the game right now and that's all you can ask," he said.

NFL

continued from page 16

take that risk because I love what I do, and you play for the love of the game."

The machismo is shared by fellow players and celebrated by their many fans. It's why Ben Roethlisberger can come back from a concussion in the last game of the regular season to start in the playoffs, and why Anquan Boldin needed only two weeks off after a vicious hit that required seven plates and over 40 screws to fix multiple fractures of his face.

Got to show your tough. Got to earn the paycheck.

Got to keep somebody else from taking your place.

"For me it was just a part of football," Boldin said later. "It's an unfortunate incident that happened but, you know, you take your bumps and bruises."

Bumps and bruises are one thing. Early death is another.

Reality intruded this week in the celebration of all things Super Bowl with some sobering news that should be posted on locker room bulletin boards around the NFL. It won't be, because the NFL would rather invite Janet Jackson back to do the halftime show than deal with the sometimes terrible physical effects of playing in a violent league.

Forget for a moment that doctors from Boston University's School of Medicine felt the need to use the national media spotlight on the big game to publicize their latest research. Concentrate instead on what they had to say, which has to be troubling to

anyone who has ever strapped on a helmet and pads.

Repeated hits to the head aren't just causing damage on the field. They may be killing former players.

Researchers say they have found evidence of a condition called chronic traumatic encephalopathy in the brains of six former players who died at relatively young ages. The condition, which can bring on dementia in people in their 40s and 50s, is more commonly found in boxers who have taken too many blows to the head.

No one has connected all the dots to conclusively blame the condition on concussions and head blows suffered while playing, and there is debate among researchers on how significant the study is. That's because players have to be dead before their brains can be examined. The NFL is doing its own study of retired players, but results are not expected for at least another two years.

Former New England linebacker Ted Johnson, who claims repeated concussions gave him brain damage, said players like Roethlisberger and Steelers safety Troy Polamalu, who has suffered at least seven concussions, should think hard about their future health.

"I kind of liken it to NASCAR racers, who don't like going to funerals or don't like going to the hospital because they don't like being reminded what could happen to them," Johnson said. "It's the same thing with football players. We don't want to know what could potentially happen to us down the road."

Count Roethlisberger among those players.

"I don't go out there and ever

worry about getting hurt or being hurt in the past," the quarterback said. "I'm playing this game and living this life to the fullest."

So is Clark, who in addition to almost knocking himself out in the hit on McGahee has some medical issues of his own. Only 29, he has a trait of sickle cell anemia, and had to have his spleen and gall bladder removed in 2007 after his left side began hurting in a game against Denver.

Concussions don't concern him. If he's worried about anything, it's that the NFL will begin to clamp down on the kind of hits he's become known for.

"If they do anything else, we're not going to be able to tackle people," Clark said. "I'd like to see them stop talking about it on TV so much. It gets so much press when you see things like (his hit on McGahee). People are beginning to believe it's a barbaric sport."

People may be right.

—Tim Dahlberg is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press.

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4	2	7	5	1	6	9	3	8
3	8	1	4	7	9	2	5	6
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2	9	8	1	6	5	3	4	7
7	5	3	2	4	8	6	1	9
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Titus Shelton
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VS


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men's basketball

Cal Poly staying alive in tight Big West race



NICK CAMACHO MUSTANG DAILY FILE PHOTO

Cal Poly senior guard Chaz Thomas (10) attempts a layup during the Mustangs' 86-82 loss to Cal State Fullerton on Jan. 8.

Scott Silvey
MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly men's basketball head coach Kevin Bromley acknowledged it was nothing short of incredible.

After being left for dead just over a week ago, sitting at 0-5 in the Big West Conference and hitting the road for two more conference games, things were looking grim for the Mustangs.

Staring at the possibility of an 0-7 conference start, Cal Poly traveled to Stockton last Thursday and knocked off perennial conference frontrunner Pacific on their home floor.

The flustered Tigers never got into the game, trailing by 17 points at halftime.

Two nights later, the Mustangs trailing by 16 points with nine minutes remaining, completed an improbable comeback to beat UC Davis 77-75 on two 3-point field goals from senior guard Chaz Thomas in the final 1:30.

Not only did the Mustangs avoid falling by the conference wayside, they climbed back into the conference race.

"I want to be in a coffin right now and I want the coffin to open up and me sit up and go, 'See we're alive. We're back from the dead,'" Bromley joked.

The Mustangs (5-12, 2-5 Big West Conference), who were in danger of missing the conference tournament a week ago, are now

see Race, page 15

BIG WEST STANDINGS 1.29.09

TEAM	BIG WEST	OVERALL
Long Beach State	5-1 .833	10-8 .556
Pacific	4-3 .571	11-7 .611
UC Davis	4-3 .571	9-11 .450
Cal State Northridge	4-3 .571	7-10 .412
UC Irvine	3-3 .500	6-13 .316
UC Riverside	3-3 .500	11-7 .611
Cal State Fullerton	3-4 .429	9-10 .474
UC Santa Barbara	2-5 .286	8-11 .421
Cal Poly	2-5 .266	5-12 .294



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Pittsburgh Steelers defensive back Ryan Clark (top) hits Baltimore Ravens running back Willis McGahee on Jan. 18.

Big hits, macho players and the dangers of the NFL

Tim Dahlberg
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Up close, Ryan Clark doesn't seem all that dangerous. Just short of 6 feet and missing a couple of internal organs, he's a bubbly kind of guy who seems more likely to talk an opposing player into submission than leave him motionless on the field.

Put a helmet on him, though, and things change quickly. That's when the Pittsburgh defender becomes a 205-pound, ball-seeking projectile speeding across the field with little regard for his own safety or that of the offending player in his sights.

"I try to be the hammer," Clark says. "I try to be the one doing the hitting, because if you're the guy sitting back waiting for the other guy to get to you, it's going to be trouble."

The hammer has been doing some pounding lately.

He leveled New England's Wes Welker in a December game. Welker left the field and didn't come back. Against Baltimore in the AFC championship game, he knocked Willis McGahee senseless in a frightening helmet-to-helmet hit that put him in the hospital overnight.

Boxing, as Mike Tyson was always fond of saying after knocking someone silly, is a hurt business. But so, too, is football, where big hits bring big celebrations and every player must deal silently with the thought that he is always just one play away from being strapped on a gurney and carted off the field.

"This is just football," said Arizona receiver Larry Fitzgerald, who will be squarely in Clark's sights in the Super Bowl. "This is a man's game, and I know that every time I go up for a pass there is a possibility that I could be knocked out, and I'm willing to

see NFL, page 15

David Beckham considering staying with AC Milan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILAN, Italy — David Beckham is enjoying his stay with AC Milan so much that he is considering remaining in Italy after his two-month loan expires.

"Playing here is the dream of every footballer," Beckham said in an interview with Italian daily Corriere della Sera on Wednesday. "But deciding isn't easy. It's a question that takes time."

Beckham's loan from the Los Angeles Galaxy expires March 8, after which he is due to return to Major League Soccer.

"I'm under contract and I have a lot of respect for the Galaxy. But the chance to play for Milan is something special," Beckham said in the interview, which was published in Italian. "I knew I would enjoy it, but I didn't expect to enjoy it this much. But in terms of character, I'm a very respectful person."

Milan vice president Adriano Galliani said Tuesday the seven-time European champions were prepared to pay a fee to keep Beckham, and would meet with his representatives in the next few days.

"I find (Milan) very similar to

Manchester United. It has that tradition that only the great clubs have," Beckham said. "At Milan, like at United, it's a very particular atmosphere wherever you go, from the training pitch to the stadium."

The former United and Real Madrid player scored his first goal for Milan in Sunday's 4-1 victory over Bologna.

His second came on Wednesday from a free kick 33 minutes into a

match against Genoa, with England coach Fabio Capello looking on. The sharp-angled shot taken from the left of Genoa's area put Milan ahead 1-0.

Beckham started in Milan's three previous matches, and the Rossoneri did not lose, drawing with AS Roma and beating Fiorentina and Bologna.

Beckham hopes to be called up by Capello for a friendly against Spain on Feb. 11 and equal Bobby Moore's record of 108 England appearances for an outfield player.

His ultimate goal is to make England's team for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, and moving back to Los Angeles may hinder that bid. Capello was the one who suggested that Milan sign Beckham.

"The Americans are doing everything they can to improve the level and reputation of their game. It's a young league and I think it needs another 10 years to become successful," said Beckham, whose contract with the Galaxy lasts through 2012.

"I have to admit that, having played in Europe, sometimes it was frustrating playing in certain games. But every now and then, moving from one state to another, I also enjoyed myself."



ASSOCIATED PRESS

AC Milan's David Beckham celebrates his first goal with his new team on Jan. 25. Beckham is currently on loan from the L.A. Galaxy.